

CONGRATULATORY LETTERS
PRESENTED TO MR. OVID VICKERS
(RETIREMENT) 1955 - 1995

MEM 214

Ovid S. Vickers

*Chairman, Division of Humanities
and Fine Arts*

English Instructor

East Central Community College

1955 - 1995



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20515

May 6, 1995

GILLESPIE V. MONTGOMERY
THIRD DISTRICT
MISSISSIPPI

Dear Ovid:

One of the highest tributes which can be paid an individual is to say he made a difference. You certainly have made a difference in the lives of hundreds of students during your 40 years of teaching at East Central.

Not only did you provide the academic learning, but also the inspiration for self-improvement.

I wish you well in retirement and commend you for a job well done. You can be assured that your teaching career will long be remembered and appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "G. Montgomery".

GILLESPIE V. MONTGOMERY
Member of Congress

Mr. Ovid Vickers
Box 58
East Central Community College
Decatur, MS 39327

Colleagues

EAST CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

DECATUR, MISSISSIPPI 39327

April 19, 1995

Dear Ovid,

We are so blessed to have come to East Central near the end of an era and to have been associated with some of the real giants who helped make the college what it is today. As I reflect back (and I am sure you share my feelings), those earlier years were the best. We had such great role models and were influenced by those who have carried us to this point in our lives. I also think of those in our group who left for greener pastures and only you and I remained.

You have made the decision to retire and within a few years I will follow. I hope a void will be felt and that in some small way our spirits will remain in this place where we gave so much of our time and talents.

I know you have many memories about people and events which happened during your period of time at East Central. There are thousands of former students who will remember you, and when they think about East Central and talk about it, you will be the main topic of conversation.

As you sit on the deck of your home and view the campus, you can remember Miss Harris, Mrs. Sullivan, Miss Burton, Mrs. Newsome, Mr. Furgerson, Ruth and Arno, Frank and Nellie, Mae and Charles Pennington, Tom, Wade, and little Peggy Ming with her little ballerina shoes. I am sure some thoughts will move you to tears, but most will be filled with laughter.

Ovid, you deserve all the recognition (and more) which this college has to offer. May your retirement years be filled with good health, close family ties, and peace in your soul knowing you made a difference in so many lives.

Sincerely,

Lucille Wood

Lucille Wood



May 1, 1995

Mr. Ovid S. Vickers
Box 58-ECCC
Decatur, MS 39327

Dear Ovid:

When I moved to Decatur in 1961, I stepped into a pleasant, laid-back section of Mississippi. My goal was to stay one year and get on to "more with it" places. The first person I met in town or on the campus of East Central who made an impression on me, and a lasting one at that, was a young, tall, dark, and angular, English/speech instructor with a classical/English name, *Ovid Vickers*. I remember the setting and circumstances of that meeting as if it happened yesterday instead of thirty-four years ago.

It was nine o'clock in the morning on the first day that I taught a class at East Central. It was coffee time and I went to the grill to get a cup. As soon as I bought one and took a seat, you appeared. The college had a young redhead working as the director of publicity at the time. You took a seat with her at a different table, looked all around and asked: "Does anyone in here have money for the jukebox? I feel like dancing." Somebody obliged you, the music got to rolling, and you asked the young woman to dance and she accepted. Dance you did! And you danced, and you swirled, and you dipped, and you turned that woman every way but loose all over the floor in Sullivan Center. Between the tables, dodging, dipping, and swaying you danced. Man alive, it was Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers all over the place before breakfast had settled for more sedate folks. I wondered if this had been done to show me I was in a very sophisticated area or in *a very different area* from any place I'd ever been, but I finally decided that it might have been done for its *shock value*. I didn't respond to the show, which was very good, nor to similar episodes in the next few weeks. A fellow instructor finally told that you said: "That Ethridge fellow is not a typical Baptist preacher." If you said that, you probably were right.

There is one thing that I know for sure, though. You are not a typical fellow in any sense of the meaning of the word. You are extraordinary, unusual, even unique, but not typical. And these characteristics have made my knowing you a real experience for these many years, friend, and a very delightful and pleasant one at that. I have come to appreciate you and respect you in so many ways for so many things that I have learned and discerned from you.

Your perception has always fascinated me. Where do you get the ability to see what is around you when others can't? Where did you get the ear to hear what is said? Your ability to do these things is only surpassed by your skill in relating what you have seen and heard in the stories you tell both orally and in the written word. You have a gift in this area; that is the only explanation for it. I have often described you as a person who has the ability to weave a tale the way Mark Twain or Will Rogers did it, but I always add that you have the added attraction of having the deportment of a gentleman of the likes of Robert E. Lee. That's a pretty good combination in this historian's view.

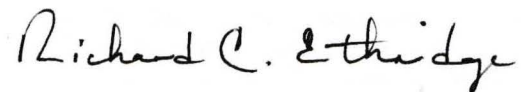
Your professionalism and productivity have also been long suits for you. I don't know of a single colleague who asked you for help that you didn't accommodate if the request had merit. I don't know of a single student that has been turned away from you without sound advice and instruction if proper motivation brought him to your door. Your writing output has been staggering to have come from our bucolic setting, and the amazing thing about it is that it has been good!

My favorite thing about you, though, is that you are personable and you have that innate ability to make everyone feel that he is special. Many times I have seen you cheer someone who needed encouragement, and quite often I have been that individual. Thanks for all of those times.

You are not dancing so dashingly now, but you are still dancing. You are not challenging, baiting, and watching for an angle to instruct and admonish as you once did. But you are still doing it. Keep it up. That is what is good about you, that is what you are good at doing, and that is what will be remembered of you when you are gone.

It has been a real pleasure, Ovid, to have had you as a colleague and friend all these years. I believe that the best years are still ahead of us. They will be slower paced to be sure, but they'll be of incomparable quality!

Your colleague,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Richard C. Ethridge". The signature is fluid and elegant, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Richard C. Ethridge

P O Box 463
Decatur, MS
April 15, 1995

Mr. Ovid S. Vickers
ECCC
Decatur, MS

Dear Mr. Vickers:

It is quite an honor to have the Fine Arts Center at East Central named for Ovid S. Vickers. A much deserved honor I must say.

Since I first met you back in 1956, I have admired and respected you. Through the years teaching with you and working closely, I continue to admire and respect you. Thank you for being yourself and including me in your circle of "friends". Many are the times when just a word of encouragement helped me through the day.

Eventhough you are retiring, I feel blessed that you are a neighbor and will continue to be an influence in my life. Thanks.

As ever,



Shelby L. Harris

East Central Community College

BAND DEPARTMENT

Decatur, MS 39327
THOMAS CARSON
Band Director



April 26, 1995

Mr. Ovid Vickers
Box 58
E. C. C. C.
Decatur, MS

Dear Mr. Vickers,

Someone asked me once how long I was planning to stay at E.C.C.C. and I told them "Until I have been here long enough to carry that damn club at graduation!!!"


How to I keep a letter short on Ovid Vickers? Several things come to mind as I think of my student days.....Marzapan, letting us sleep in your class during the musical, Gilbert Sommers and that flea-ridden dog of his, and some advice you gave me that I still remember 20 years later, "Going to College has nothing to do with making money, It has to do with saying 'I know' and 'I don't know'".

The past thirteen years at E.C.C.C. you and I have shared many stories and snippets in your office that absolutely have no meaning to anyone but the two of us. I always enjoyed hearing of your summer trips to Europe as you and I could relate to experiences you had, as many were the same I had growing up over there. (Lee Weeks sitting in with that smelly morrocan band was great!!!).

There never was a dull moment as you and I shared the trials and tribulations of my fellow instructors Maid Marianne, and Sir Charles (I quit, I don't quit, I quit, I don't quit, I resign, I come back, I threaten to resign, I stay) OH GOD, WHAT HELL!!!

As you leave me at the mercy of "the den of vipers" in my building, please share a quiet chuckle with me in spirit as I continue my quest to keep things quasi normal in the Ovid Vickers Fine Arts Center.

Best Wishes,



Tom Carson
"Mordred"

P. O. Box 445
Decatur, MS 39327
April 28, 1995

Mr. Ovid Vickers
Box 58 - ECCC
Decatur, MS 39327

Dear Ovid:

I have mixed emotions as I write this letter. First of all, I am happy for you as you approach your retirement. On the other hand, I am sad when I think of East Central Community College without you. You have meant so much to this institution and to so many individuals through the years that it is difficult to imagine your not being around on a fulltime basis. I have countless fond memories of you and unlimited gratitude for what you have meant to me.

My earliest memory of you is in the student center with a group of us gathered around talking to you and singing "Honky Tonk Angel." We were totally fascinated by your "wonderful gift of gab." I also well remember the day that I walked into your English class with great anticipation (and a little fear). After all, you were already somewhat of a "legend" back then. I enjoyed your class so much that I couldn't wait to enroll in English Literature. You literally made the literature come alive, and I credit you for the good foundation I received in both composition and literature. I will have to admit that I was not as eager nor as apt in your speech class because I was "nervous." I don't know how serious you were when you continued to tell me that I needed to be majoring in English, but I took you at your word and changed my major from business to English. I have never regretted this move, and I am indebted to you for encouraging me and giving me confidence in my ability.

Your influence did not end in the classroom. I have continued to seek your guidance through the years as I have furthered my education and pursued a career in English. You have been a valued friend, colleague, and mentor. I am grateful for having had the opportunities to be associated with you both in and out of the classroom.

Although you have certainly "earned" some relaxation time, the selfish side of me would like to keep you at East Central. I know I join many others in reluctantly seeing you make this move but at the same time wishing you the happiness you so richly deserve. Congratulations!

Sincerely,



Linda Baucum

May 1, 1995

Dear Ovid,

Approximately twenty-five years ago, I entered the freshman class at East Central Community College. Having attended a very small rural high school left me somewhat awestruck by the opportunity I now had to earn a college degree. Like so many freshmen, I had no idea what I planned to do with my life; I just wanted to experience East Central. Then I enrolled in your English Composition class. That was when I realized that the only limits I had to stay within were the ones I placed on myself.

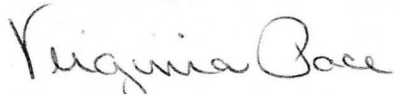
Before I left East Central, not only did I have a deeper love and appreciation for literature, but I also had a new direction for my life. Thanks to you, Bruce Peterson, and my small role in South Pacific I met new friends and gained a confidence in my own abilities that I would carry with me always. Perhaps the greatest gift you gave me at that point, however, was the "encouragement" to develop my relationship with Sammy.

Once I reached Mississippi State, years later, I found myself seated next to Nona Vickers who always checked her mail before coming to class, and I always envied her the days she had a letter from you. She will probably never know how badly I wanted to snatch those letters from her and read them myself because I knew they were full of wonderful things.

Being back at East Central as a faculty member has been a dream come true. I have enjoyed having you as a colleague and friend for these many years. I will never forget getting the two of us lost in Laurel that night or the "departmental picnics" at Turkey Creek. I will think of you fondly everytime I fry chicken for the Delta basketball game, and I hope you know that you have a standing invitation! I will also never forget trying to get my children to bed when you would come to visit. They would hide behind the door with the excuse, "We just wanted to hear him talk some more."

You have truly been a friend and inspiration, and I will sincerely miss dropping into your office fifty times a day. Somehow, East Central just will not be East Central without you.

Sincerely,



Virginia Pace

May 3, 1995

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Dear Ovid:

This is a really hard task to complete. You are such an important part of our lives it is difficult to express in a letter.

Living so far from our families you have become our "Mississippi" father, mentor, co-worker, and made us a part of your family. But, even more important, you have become our best friend! Because of this relationship, you have made us laugh - often - causing us to enjoy life in Decatur, Mississippi more than we could ever have imagined.

In four short years we have so many fond memories because of you. Trips to Natchez, in a field at night with wine-watching shooting stars, malapropism, The Neshoba County Fair, study tables, basketball games (eating on the way to basketball games), cooking-out, church, your public speaking, Pete and Betty stories, our most recent trip to Livingston, just to name a few. The time we spend with you is always enjoyable, but we will always remember foremost in our minds, sitting in the lounge at the Holiday Inn, in Meridian, before going to eat at Grinders!

Fortunately, your retiring does not mean our friendship will end. Hopefully, it will give us more time to spend with our best friend.

Congratulations on a great teaching career and the honor of having the Fine Arts Building named after you! You deserve it!

It is hard to imagine East Central without Ovid S. Vickers, just as it is hard for us to imagine life without our friend Ovid S. Vickers!

Your Friends
The Coopers
Marty and Jennifer

Marty Cooper
Jennifer Cooper

P.S. Please over-look any errors as we could not have you proof this letter!

EAST CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

DECATUR, MISSISSIPPI 39327

April 24, 1995

Mr. Ovid Vickers
ECCC Box 58
Decatur, MS 39327

Dear Mr. Vickers:

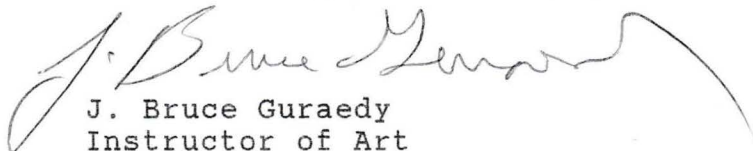
First and foremost I would like to express my sincere gratitude for your advice, leadership, and friendship through our twenty years of knowing one another. You were the very first faculty member of the college to invite me (a total stranger) to your house for a small party. This warm gesture on your behalf and things done by other college faculty certainly had a lot to do with me staying at this institution.

Twenty years ago you gave me some sound advice that I still apply today. You said and I quote "Guraedy, teaching is 75% delivery and 25% content." By Damn Mr. Vickers, you sure as Hell were right!.

Although you never knew this, I often used you as an example of a teacher who taught with vigor and excitement in my Art For Teachers class. All have agreed and attested to your style, further stating, that a subject they had never been interested in came alive with meaning and cause. "Is that not what teaching is all about?" I would add.

Thanks for supporting my program. Your opinions were always taken with the utmost confidence. It was a pleasure to serve on a committee to try to find ways to honor you for your dedicated service to this nation, state, and community college district. It is also a pleasure to get to write this personal letter to you about yourself, hoping that you will fully realize, that you alone have influenced the minds of many students and faculty for generations to come in a very positive way.

With deep regard and respect



J. Bruce Guraedy
Instructor of Art
East Central Community College



Route 3, Box 44-B
Philadelphia, MS 39350
April 25, 1995

Mr. Ovid Vickers
Box 58-ECCC
Decatur, MS 39327

Dear Mr. Vickers,

I have mixed emotions about your retirement. I am happy that you will be able to do things without having to listen for the bell to ring--both the school bell and the clock alarm. On the other hand, I am saddened for the students who will no longer have the opportunity to experience your classes and for us teachers (me in particular) who may find it more difficult to locate our mentor when some problem arises.

I want to thank you for taking me under your wing and making my transition from high school teaching to teaching here a most enjoyable experience. I always knew that as long as I did my job you were backing me a hundred percent.

Those first few years, I looked forward to lunch more than to any other part of the day.

I expect something outstanding (a novel? a drama? a book of poetry? a gourmet meal? all of the preceding?) in the near future.

If you ever miss grading papers or teaching class, just let me know. My classes would love to have a guest lecturer, and I am always behind on my paper grading.

Best wishes. And remember you may be retiring, but you are not leaving. You will always be the embodiment of ECCC.

Love,



Leonard Barrier

EAST CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

DECATUR, MISSISSIPPI 39327

April 18, 1995

Mr. Ovid Vickers
Post Office Box 58
East Central Community College
Decatur, Mississippi 39327

Dear Mr. Vickers:

I would like to take this opportunity to share with you how much you mean to me and East Central Community College.

I have known you for five years, and throughout those five years I have learned a great deal from you. As a colleague, I have the utmost respect for you and your work here at East Central. I have always been impressed with your loyalty to teaching and your sense of commitment to higher learning. You have contributed a great deal throughout your forty years of teaching.

On a more personal note, I must add that you have been a positive role model for me. I came to Decatur at a young age, and you guided me through some difficult times in my career and personal life. Even now, when I face a difficult task, I recall your words of wisdom, "I strove with none, for none were worth my strife."

I have appreciated the support you have given me during productions. Your words of encouragement to the cast and myself helped push us even closer to doing a better job with each show. Many of the students look to you as some kind of "theatre god," and I must add that I do too.

I will always hold dear to my heart all that you have taught me professionally. I will always keep deep within my heart the fond memories I have of us seeing various plays, and the wonderful places you and your wife have taken me throughout the South.

Mr. Vickers, I respect you professionally, and I love you dearly as a friend.

Sincerely,

Judy Carroll
Judy Carroll



Juanita West
P.O. Box 164
Newton, MS 39345

Mr. Ovid Vickers, Chairman
Communication and Fine Arts
East Central Community College
Decatur, MS 39327

Dear Mr. Vickers,

The salutation "dear" has so much more meaning in it than just the normal greeting, for you are just exactly that-**DEAR** to all who know you and have known you through your illustrious years of service to East central.

Even though I have only had these three years of full-time work with you, I feel as if though we have known each other for many decades. Your influence and command for excellence have always preceded you, especially into the district high schools. Therefore, I knew you long before we ever had an official introduction.

When I began my summer school teaching with EC, it was such a joy for me to teach with you and have the opportunity to visit with you and to share with you about the needs and expectations for students, not only in English classes but in life. You were, and continue to be, an inspiration to me as I have tried and try to encourage students to pursue the very best in themselves and in their futures, which includes a knowledge and command of the language.

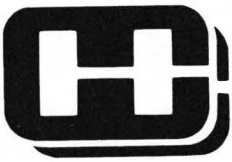
As I have stated, I am envious of your command of the language. I am sure that you will become my model for all classes in the future as I continue to challenge students as you have challenged us. So, take a short rest and a deep breath, for you will be first on the guest lecture list as we work on understanding the impact that the Latin, French, and English languages have had on our vocabulary. Then as we work to understand the rich heritage of our words and their uses, you will surely be ready to lecture on folklore and its contributions.

Ah, Mr. Vickers, you just think you are weary; alas, no rest for the weary! As a transitive verb, retire means "to cause to withdraw from one's USUAL FIELD OF ACTIVITY." Therefore, as you retire, we wait with great anticipation to see the next field of activity on which you embark.

Mr. Vickers, I toast your next 40 years and the depth of joy and meaning that you will contribute to them. Enjoy the adventure that is before you.

Sincerely,

Juanita



HINDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

RAYMOND CAMPUS • RAYMOND, MISSISSIPPI 39154-9799

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

13 April 1995

Professor Ovid Vickers
English Department
East Central Community College
Decatur, MS

Dear Ovid:

I address this letter to you as I have addressed countless letters over the past thirty years, thirty years of wonderful friendship. From a professional friendship to a personal friendship, each year has added memories to fill a treasure chest.

I recall so many events that we have shared.

SCETC conventions from Jackson to Biloxi to Louisville to Williamsburg to Jacksonville to Winston-Salem and places in between. (Reminds me of Hank Snow's recitation of cities in "I've Been Everywhere, Man.") What fun we have had! Frightened in stormy weather as we two fraidy-cats flew the not-so-friendly skies to conventions and home again. The plane we almost missed after a night of snow and wonder whether we could get home from North Carolina. SCETCers rolling in the aisles at the theater in Memphis as we all listened to you read about Miss Tiny's baptism-- and you never cracked a smile. The respect you brought to the annual readings event. Your courtly attention to all the girls from Hinds from the banquet hall to the dance floor.

MCTE meetings from Lake Tiak O'Khata to The Walthall. Your program on folklore at the old Sheraton Inn that kept everybody in stitches except one fellow from Jones Junior College who never even grinned, much less smiled. Lunch with you and Mary Ann Dazey (now that's a threesome). A long and unenthusiastic session we endured and your comment: I thought P..... might go into a coma before it was over.

Hot, wonderful days at the Neshoba County Fair. Visiting on the front porch of the cabin. Good food. Betting on the horse races. The great chair race for good seats for the George Strait concert. Walking around the fairgrounds where you are greeted by one and all with such deference--you could be an emir from the Middle East.

Delightful letters and cards. Those of us in the English Department who attend meetings with you always wait eagerly for your letters assessing the meetings. A letter I vividly remember was your description of an Atlanta restaurant, a converted church building, and the monk-cowled waiters. Your comment about an outfit I once wore: "My goodness. I thought Zelda had appeared." And there are the antique post cards. I keep one on my desk with the message "This is the message we broadcast from our Sunday School. We are having a good time. We wish you were here. Come next Sunday. 'Learn to do well.' Isaiah 1:17" And I am trying.

Your comment about our house: "One can never be bored here because there are books and magazines everywhere."

The profession is lessened by your retirement; we are losing "a part of the main." But we are richer for your having been in the profession. Legions think of you as teacher, motivator, mentor, and friend. And speak of you in awe.

Lest this epistle become a tome, I will quit writing but I will not stop reminiscing.

To me (and Bob and Ryn) you will always be friend.

Love,

Ann Laster

Of all fond words
of tongue or pen
The fondest are
We have done

Of all fond words
of tongue or pen
The fondest are
We have done

Of all fond words
of tongue or pen
The fondest are
We have done

Ovid Vickers
Box 58-ECCC
Decatur, MS 39327
April 12, 1995

Dear Ovid:

How do I begin a letter about what our friendship--both professional and personal--has meant to me over the years that I've known you? That's an impossible task, but then I've never shied away from the impossible before, so I don't intend to start now.

I should begin at the beginning, my first recollection of Ovid Vickers at SCETC. That would have been Biloxi, 1981, my first conference. Of course, I noticed right away the dignified, stately gentleman who seemed to be the exclusive property of the other Hinds women, the ones who had seniority at SCETC, and those women didn't seem willing to share. Polly was downright stingy--and still is, if you want to know the truth--and Ann Laster just danced off with you, Ovid, on that tiny ballroom floor the last night. I was extremely jealous because those women had the most interesting person in the room with them. I went home disheartened and with a bad headache from my first conference.

My next real Ovid memory was the memorable trip to Atlanta, when you went with us in the Hinds van. We started out sort of sleepy and lethargic, but when you entered the van in Decatur, the atmosphere changed. We began to tell stories and have fun, and that fun lasted all the way through the convention. You and I finally got to dance in Atlanta, in that dark and smoky bar where men in trench coats hid and watched. That was the trip when you rescued Faye, when you worried about her migraine, when you kept an eye on those Livingston "boys"--who haven't attended a conference since!--and when you read the poem about Papa and the guineas. I think that poetry reading was the time I really knew that we were kindred spirits. I wanted to be your friend for life.

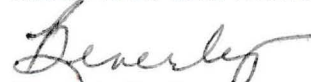
From there we've had many conference memories. There was the train trip to Washington, when you brought Valentine chocolates to the group and we visited in the bar car into the wee hours of the morning. An all-night train trip creates intimate friendships, and that one was no different. Remember that dinner in the Italian restaurant near the hotel when we were joined by that obnoxious woman who monopolized the conversation--and we all just assumed she was someone else's friend--and found out later none of us knew her? Then there was the incident in the lounge in the hotel in Washington, when you strong-armed a group of young whippersnappers who attempted to move in; your words were memorable: "I raised these girls! These girls belong to me!" And we did, Ovid, lock, stock, and barrel. That was also the first time we shared food, though you swore you wouldn't. And the last day, before we reboarded the train, you took us to that wonderful tearoom in the National Gallery of Art, where we ate dainty finger sandwiches and pretty teacakes. The train trip back was quieter because we were savoring the taste of friendship.

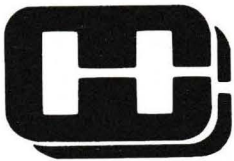
And there are so many other trips and occasions for camaraderie. In Louisville, we piled into sweet Verle Barnes' van and wheeled into "Phoenix Hill" for an evening of dancing and imbibing. We danced and visited in St. Pete and in Charlottesville and in Raleigh and Well, we have accompanied each other all over the southeastern United States. And that doesn't include parties in Raymond or trips to the Neshoba County Fair or meetings in other places or your kind invitation to Faye and me to present our civil rights gig at East Central--after a sumptuous dinner party at your house. I remember your apologizing that the pay would be small, and Faye and I laughed that we would pay YOU for the honor of doing our program for you.

Often, you have accompanied us with pastries in hand; usually, you have also had a poem or a story; always, you have brought your distinctive brand of enthusiasm and fun and friendship and love. And it is that aspect of your nature--that enthusiasm and fun and friendship and love--which means the most to me, Ovid. I know that I have a true friend in you, one who cares about what happens to me and one who cares what I'm about. That makes me feel very special because I know you well enough to know that you choose your friends carefully. Being your acquaintance is one thing; being your friend is quite another. And having the opportunity to visit with you this last conference was yet another reminder of that friendship. As I indignantly told the eavesdropper who accused Faye and me of "working" you, "We don't have to 'work' Ovid; Ovid is our friend and we love him!"

And we do love you, and I do love you, Ovid. I thank you for embracing me as a friend, and I look forward to many more years of friendship. . . both in the professional world and in the personal one. You are a keeper, and I intend to keep you. Let's drink to that!

Much love and friendship,


Beverly Fatherree



HINDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

RAYMOND CAMPUS • RAYMOND, MS 39154-9799

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

May 6, 1995

Dear Ovid,

I don't like any of this business of your retiring.

Forget the hole you will leave at East Central and SCETC. I'm concerned about who will take care of me at conferences. The first time I met you was on the Hinds van headed for Atlanta in 1983. And, all the way there you laughed at Beverly's herpes jokes while Jerry drove and ate strawberry Newtons. Later that night, after I danced to Michael Jackson songs with some guy in a trench coat, I remember (at least I think I remember) your making sure I got back to my hotel room safely. What did you do with that guy anyway?

Then in Washington you showed us the whole Smithsonian in two hours. I remember being pulled from room to room, from the Hope Diamond to Fonzie's jacket to Mamie Eisenhower's inaugural gown, under some dinosaur bones and down to a lovely garden restaurant, where you finally allowed me to eat off your plate. You had come a long way from saying, "I don't do that."

Then there was that side trip from St. Petersburg to "Gatlinburg on the Gulf," which I'm surprised we found at all, considering that with my driving, your navigating, and Betty's backseat directions, we took six wrong turns north of Tampa.

Happy hour in Jacksonville this past February was much more sedate than some of my earlier exploits, but you were there as an important part of the experience. I was able to tell you that I had found the love of my life, and you listened enthusiastically to my dreams and secrets.

Your voice has been with me for the last twelve years as I recall your quips, your stories, and sometimes just that look you get when you put your hands on your hips and think, "Well, I never!" When I haven't seen you for a while I will rummage through my little treasures and find a letter from you or some delightful piece that you have written for Southern Living. Your voice can be heard so clearly in your writing, that reading your work is like listening to one of your wonderful stories in person.

Thank you, Ovid, for all the fun. And I still don't like this retirement thing.

Love,
Jay

"A Commitment to Quality Education"

Raymond Campus • Utica Campus • Jackson Campus • Rankin Branch • Vicksburg/Warren County Branch • Nursing/Allied Health Center

POLLY MARSHALL

Dearest Ouid,

12 April 1995

So this is it. Why am I reminded of Browning's "Grow old along with me / The best is yet to be," when everything has already been so good?

I know the best will continue; for wherever you are,

you make it so by the sanctness of your presence — by your ability to see all your friends enveloped by some deep cosmic meaning. You high drama us beyond what we are, and we struggle to be as you see us.

Retirement won't mean that. We look forward to years of deepening friendships and moments

of remember when? and did she do that? I remember it well — but it happened this way.

In the meantime, I will continue to use most of my energy in fighting my jealousy of Carol who now has got fulltime.

I am tired of goodness.

I love you,

Polly

April 1995

Dear Ovid,

You'll be reading dozens & dozens of letters from life-long friends, former students, family members - most of which will be "published" on lovely-top grade paper with the best fonts available on word processors. My letter will be remembered - my "real" ink pen on recycled paper. Those of us who love the written word know what & how we write does reflect our personalities; thus, you may perceive me as a rough draft - so be it. (Although you're most refined & elegant, I think you may also consider yourself a "rough draft.")

The first time I met you (more specifics later), I had to wonder what this articulate & obviously well-educated gentleman was doing in an English classroom at East Central. You belonged, at the very least, in some far-away consulate making diplomatic decisions. Or perhaps you belonged in one of Europe's fine museums or art galleries - as curator, of course.

However, having had the pleasurable experience of getting to know you, our

very own Renaissance man, I've concluded that your place, dear Ovid, in our universe is in the classroom at East Central because you've been able to "teach" thousands of young adults much more than English.

An example of your teaching - At a writing workshop at Hinds, we did a little role-playing: You the teacher, me the student writer. Our assignment: a personal narrative with concentration on the five senses. I wrote about the many sunrises I'd spent with my beloved grandfather. As you read my rough draft, you treated the manuscript as if it were the best-written, most articulate, & most important piece of prose you'd ever read. You also acted as if reading my rough draft were the most pressing & significant task you'd ever undertaken.

As a young teacher, I got a year's worth of "learning" during our brief encounter that day. I learned that I should give my students undistracted attention, that respecting the work of my students would empower them & make them answerable to & responsible for their "final drafts" of life. I also learned that learning is contagious, that

my interest in my students' writing would be reflected in their assignments.

Your name, dear Ovid, should be in Webster's as the first item behind the word teacher because you represent all that a teacher strives to be.

Your charisma extends beyond the classroom. You have the rare ability to make your friends & loved ones feel important - probably because your friends & loved ones have your respect. Ever the Southern Gentleman, you have magical powers, making everyone you talk with feel important & significant. Your memory astounds me.

So much about you astounds me, Ovid. As a friend (& colleague) I feel so fortunate to have been in your "path." Most of the time, I've been able to express my thoughts & feelings very well; the language has served me well. But our language fails me now as I try to convey the respect & love I feel for you. I wish that I could be there to give you a big hug & hear that magic voice greet me warmly, then ask about my children. Today you're

surrounded by people who love & respect you,
by people who've been influenced by your
magical teaching powers, by people who
applaud your talents. Physically, I'm not
among the crowd - but spiritually, I stand
among the others who happily celebrate
all that you are, dear Ovid Tickers.

Fondly,
Retta Porter



HINDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

RAYMOND CAMPUS • RAYMOND, MS 39154-9799

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

April 12, 1995

Mr. Ovid Vickers
Box 58-ECCC
Decatur, MS 39327

Dear Ovid:


Through the years you have given us many reasons to consider you a full-fledged member of the Raymond Campus English Department with all the benefits except a monthly check. You have supported us personally and professionally, cavorted with us at MCTE, SCETC, the Southern Literary Festival and anywhere else we could cavort, made us realize again and again that almost any problem can be tolerated and maybe even resolved if we have a humorous outlook, and genuinely inspired us through your dedication to teaching and caring about students.

You have generously shared your sense of humor, your knowledge, and your talent with others, and money was never a major concern. One of my fondest memories is the program you did during the 1989 Mississippi and the Arts Week: "The Sources of Southern Writing: From Colonel Sartoris to Colonel Sanders." Our students enjoyed your presentation because they could identify with what you said, especially what it means to be a Southerner.

I'm sure that in some ways you will miss teaching students to think and to write effectively and to enjoy literature; but just think, you will no longer have to try to explain why statements such as these are inaccurate or illogical: "My favorite seasons are the Fourth of July, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and the wedding season"; "The King Edward version of the Bible goes way back"; "One side effect of drug abuse is death"; "Phoenix (Jackson) is an appropriate name because the author is from the area where the Phoenix is located."

Thanks again, Ovid, for allowing us to share many good times with you and your family. You will always be very special to all of us.


Cordially,


Peggy Brent

"A Commitment to Quality Education"

Raymond Campus • Utica Campus • Jackson Campus • Rankin Branch • Vicksburg/Warren County Branch • Nursing/Allied Health Center

April 8, 1995



Ovid,

I am sure that you have deduced by now that your daughter (my godchild) Harriet has requested that some of us share with you some of the memories of our association with you in our work at ECJC. This, of course, is in celebration of your retirement after forty (40) years (and I am sure happy ones) of hard work (or was it more like play!?).

There is no way I could begin to cover everything in the confines of something as short as this, especially all the fun we had with Miss Stella and Aunt Janie! Consequently, I shall limit myself to a few of the highlights.

You and I went there together but I was there only one-tenth of the time that you will have been there. Nevertheless, you and I put in a lot of hard work, especially on those "Ed Sullivan-type" shows that we "threw together" for those high school recruiting days, and in connection with that there is one sincere compliment I want to pay you: I have never worked with anyone with a more fertile and creative imagination for ideas that would work, and I mean you came up with them almost immediately! That is a God-given talent and you have used it well!

One more thing and I shall stop embarrassing you. Once when you and Carol came to see me in Goodman, you said that it is a mark of true friendship when you see someone after many years and the conversation resumes as though there had been no gap at all. I thank you for that.

After you do finally retire and settle down, you and Carol come to see me and let's "do lunch" sometime.

I sincerely hope that you have a truly happy retirement!

In memory of the good times,

Tom

EAST CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

DECATUR, MISSISSIPPI 39327

5-6-95

Mr. Vickers,

For years I taught students at Union High School who would come to East Central and return to say they had been profoundly inspired by an incredible English professor. They would sometimes follow this comment with, "You remind us of HIM!" I only knew of your reputation and did not fully appreciate the HONOR this compliment carried until this year.

Your subjects may be language and literature but your "impact" is felt in the hopes, dreams and spirit of your students. It is my desire to "touch the lives" of those I contact in the same way.

Thanks for the "Lesson in Education," though you may never have known it was happening.

Your inspiration is positive and profound. I hope to carry my part of the torch you represent in a way that would make you proud.

Thank you Mr. Vickers,

Roger Whitehead

June 13, 1995

Mr. Ovid Vickers
Decatur, MS 39327

Dear Ovid

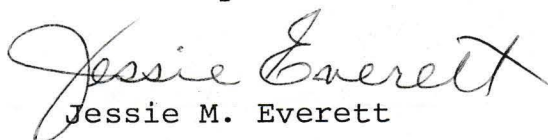
Your special day was not attended by me because of an unexpected out-of-town trip. Having to accompany my husband and a lady client of his to finalize a case in New Orleans was the reason. (he would not take the client and stay in New Orleans without my going)!

It was enjoyable to know and to work with you for all those many years at East Central. Many pleasant experiences can be recalled from having been associated with you during the years. The school I have loved since my first two years of college is much better off today having had you as an instructor.

Your retirement will be just as enjoyable as your teaching years is my wish for you.

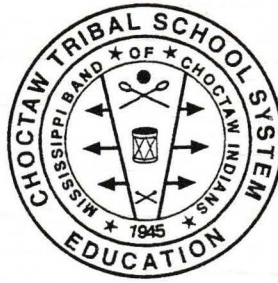
Please know that my thoughts were with you on your day and it was with regret that I had to be away.

Sincerely


Jessie M. Everett

Please excuse the lateness of this letter--I have been gone for most of the spring and summer.

MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS



CHOCTAW TRIBAL SCHOOLS
P. O. BOX 6008
PHILADELPHIA, MS 39350
TELEPHONE (601) 656-5251, EXT. 476
FAX (601) 656-9454

Dear Mr. Vickers:

In 1961 when I sat enthralled in your speech class, I had no idea that eight years later you would become my mentor and my division chairman for the next twenty years of my life. Through those years that I was part of the English faculty at East Central, you were an inspiration to me. Your sharing ideas about making learning enjoyable helped me to be a better teacher. Your advice about discipline helped me to enjoy my days in the classroom.

The changes in the college that we witnessed from the time that I began teaching until I retired were phenomenal. However, the hours we spent talking about how we could adapt to these changes were influential in the direction my teaching took. I believe that the highest compliment a teacher can receive is to have a pupil say, "My career would not have been what it has been without your influence." I can truly say this to you. I also want to add a sincere thank you to that statement because my life has been better because of your influence.

Something that I miss in my career today is the conversations you, Mrs. Simmons, Miss Wood, Dr. Ethridge, and I had on the intellectual level as we discussed Shakespeare or Faulkner, the latest trends in education, or what was happening in the history of our nation. These conversations reminded me of the English coffee houses where stimulating conversations were a part of daily life.

I also enjoyed sharing ideas about your writing. The article I remember most vividly was the one which eventually appeared in Southern Living. You didn't think the "germ" which eventually grew into the article had any possibilities. Yet, as I watched it develop into the published article, I observed the real art of writing. This experience taught me a great deal about the teaching of writing.

I suppose I would still be at East Central teaching freshman English if you had not helped me to see the possibilities within myself. Perhaps, I would

have continued to try to be the kind of teacher that you are. Alas, I cannot tell a story like you or captivate an audience in the way you can; however, you helped me to understand that I have different talents and abilities. Although you did not agree with my choices and tried to convince me not to choose to go when I did, I did so because you had helped me to believe in myself and my ability to make the right choice. The path that I have chosen has been the right road for me.

The words of Robert Frost in "The Road Not Taken" express the way I feel about my career and East Central. Let me remind you of those words.

The Road Not Taken

*Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;*

*Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,*

*And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.*

*I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a woods, and I-
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.*

Thank you for everything.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carrie Ann Alford".

Carrie Ann Alford



THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

April 24, 1995

Mr. Ovid Sparks Vickers
[REDACTED]

Dear Ovid:

Congratulations on being honored by the naming of the Fine Arts Center at East Central Community College for you. Ella and I are delighted to see this well-deserved recognition come your way.

On Saturday, May 6, our son Mark will be at home to participate in the wedding of a young man whose family has been a long-time close friend of our family. We regret that we will not be on hand to enjoy the celebration honoring you at East Central.

We send our best wishes to you and Carol; and, again, we extend our invitation for you to come to Hattiesburg for a visit.

Some months ago, your son came by the President's Office for a visit with me which I thoroughly enjoyed. You and Carol have reared really fine children.

Yours very sincerely,

Aubrey K. Lucas
President

AKL/jbt

[REDACTED]
May 2, 1995

Dear Mr. Vickers,

I congratulate you on reaching this significant milestone in your professional career. May next Saturday, your special day, be one of joy and many happy remembrances for you and your family.

Forty years of service is a long time in the same institution. This thought tells me that your successes in teaching, training and guidance have overcome many barriers of adversity. As the saying goes, "you have worn many hats," in your working years and with that you have an abundant memories to choose from in future years. Hopefully you will forgive and forget the unpleasant and linger with successes so vital to you and others.

The end of a major career is also the beginning of a big change in your life. May your years of retirement be all you have hoped and planned. You are blessed with a loving and supporting family in a home where private and personal activities are planned at will.

In my effort to visualize the years from so great a distance, my thoughts returned to late August 1955, Newton Mississippi. There, on my way to East Central Junior College for the beginning of a new year, I heard a young stranger inquire the way to that place. On May 6, I will join in mind and heart with the crowd present to thank you for many deeds of friendship and helpful co-worker during my remaining years on the campus. Thanks also for keeping me in touch with alumni and other co-workers, and the expanding growth of East Central Community College.

Sincerely,

Ethel Burton

A decorative border consisting of a double-line rectangular frame with L-shaped corner pieces at each of the four corners.

Former Students



Barry L. Mellinger, President

Dr. Clifton D. Taylor, Vice President
Jefferson Davis Campus
2226 Switzer Road Gulfport, MS 39507
Telephone: 601/896-2519

April 10, 1995

Ovid Vickers
Box 58 - ECCC
Decatur, MS 39327

Dear Mr. Vickers,

How many times have you heard "I dreaded speech class and waited till my last semester at ECJC to take it"? Yet the things I learned in your course are still part of me today as I near the end of my twenty-sixth teaching year. Don't ask me what comes to mind first when I think of you. A kaleidoscope of rich, scattered images emerges:

"Miss Bailey, there is another half of the class on this side of the room; please also look at them when you give a speech."
(Surprise, Mr. V. -- I was nervous!)

"That was an excellent demonstration speech, Miss Bailey. You had only three shoes. Using very few items means no clutter to the presentation." (Since I'd had a cold for two days before that speech, I lay in bed practicing and got so long-winded in my mind that what began as a one-minute talk on eight types of shoes for various occasions became^a right-to-the-time-limit speech on three shoes.)

"No jewelry, people, except maybe a watch. Our purpose is to inform, not to entertain."

Well, Mr. V., I've tried to remember to talk to the entire group, not just to the ones right in front of my nose. I do try to include gestures and visual aids when I speak. However, I've failed miserably in a couple



Barry L. Mellinger, President

Dr. Clifton D. Taylor, Vice President
Jefferson Davis Campus
2226 Switzer Road Gulfport, MS 39507
Telephone: 601/896-2519

of categories. I have become a collector of jewelry and wear a lot of it daily, even when I speak; I have decided that if the audience is not listening to me, at least the people have something interesting to look at. I never learned to be comfortable speaking extemporaneously, so I stick to a written script, but I do try to make that speech sound like me as I naturally talk. It took many "State of the Region" addresses to Phi Theta Kappa conventions to learn what worked best for me. I choose to believe I have digested principles you taught and have tailored them to myself.

You know it is very hard to write this letter because, of course, here I am, mentally grading my own writing as I produce it -- noticing "a lot," sentence fragments, "stick," sentences ending in prepositions, "couple of," and so forth. (Notice I can spell a lot correctly!) Forever the English teacher... Don't you hate people to ask you what you do, for they always respond, "Oh, no, I'll have to watch what I say, so you won't notice my grammar"?

I digress. Before I waxed so eloquent, wasn't I doing a kaleidoscope of images?

-Mr. Vickers at the Memphis, Tennessee, meeting in 1986, suggesting me for the SCETC Nominating Committee

-Mr. Vickers the next year in Jackson, Mississippi, saying I did well after my speech as Nominating Committee Chair (Talking before a conference of English teachers is a daunting task for any English teacher still uncomfortable with public speaking, but you made me feel good with an unsolicited, unexpected, spur-of-the-moment bit of praise. Thank you for those words. How did Wordsworth say it in "Tintern Abbey"? "...little, nameless, unremembered acts/Of kindness and of love....")



Barry L. Mellinger, President

Dr. Clifton D. Taylor, Vice President
Jefferson Davis Campus
2226 Switzer Road Gulfport, MS 39507
Telephone: 601/896-2519

-A colleague who undertook the prodigious task of writing the history of SCETC for the twenty-fifth anniversary conference in St. Petersburg, Florida


-A former teacher, a friend, listening to me accept as ECCC's Alumna of the Year for 1992 ("Thank you for teaching me to speech!")

As I quoted from Tennyson in my Alumna remarks, "I am a part of all that I have met," so truly you are a part of me. Congratulations on forty years of excellent influence on students. Thank you for so many things. Wæshæil.

Love,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "June".

June Jacquelyn Bailey, Salutatorian
East Central Junior College, Class of 1966


April 3, 1995

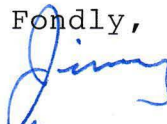

Mr. Ovid Vickers
Box 58-ECCC
Decatur, MS 39327

Dear Ovid:

There have been many things written about special teachers. If you gather all the things that have been written or said about all the special teachers in the world then maybe--just maybe--you could write an adequate description of the teaching career of Ovid Vickers. We cannot even begin to imagine all the lives you have touched and influenced in your 40 years at East Central. Ovid, you are special to us-- a wonderful teacher, a delightful person and a good friend.

Congratulations on your retirement! We hope it is even more enjoyable than you anticipate.

Fondly,

Jimmy and Margaret Kilpatrick

1958

Retirement means new pleasure
in daily "little things,"
Enjoying the fresh beginning
that each new morning brings...
Retirement means looking ahead
to future days that hold
New friends to meet, new things to do,
and happiness untold.

Remember I was your first pet -
Ra - more like your first pest!!
I remember that you had to
make me do my term paper -
I have always been grateful to
you for everything you taught
me at E.C.J.C.
Eugenio

May your retirement
be the happiest time
of your life!

Nobody deserves it more.

We hope you enjoy retirement
as much as we have enjoyed
ours. We will be unable to
attend on May 6. The Forest
Class of 1955 is having a
40th year reunion.

Les and Eugenia

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

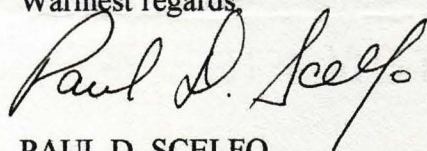
May 2, 1995

Mr. Ovid Vickers
East Central Community College
Decatur, Mississippi 39327

Dear Mr. Vickers:

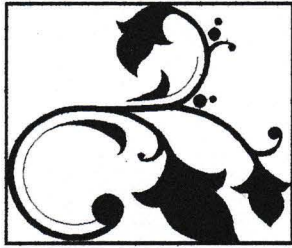
I hope you are doing well. Congratulations on your upcoming retirement. I attended ECCC in 1982-83 and had the pleasure of being a student in your literature class for one semester. However, what I remember most are the times we sat in the union talking about everything from football to Camelot. I wanted you to know it meant a great deal to have been associated with you, as well as ECCC. I still tell my wife of the many adventures EC had to offer. Since I've left East Central and Mississippi, I have come to realize I depend a great deal on the knowledge and wisdom I attained there. I am still influenced everyday by my experience at the college. You surely made my education at EC a treasured reward. I hope you have many great years of retirement to enjoy.

Warmest regards,



PAUL D. SCELFO

PDS/tbs



April, 1995

Dear Ovid and Carol:

Throughout our life together we have always remembered with fondness our friendship and experiences. Our lives have been so intertwined from the first time that Jimmy enrolled at East Central. The speech class and all the wonderful teachings gave him much needed confidence that some say has served him well! Vivid memories of you both living such positive and independent lives in your marriage; Nona playing around the campus and in Winston Hall; the birth of Harriet; Kelly Hodges and my preparing to take you, Ovid, to the hospital (how disappointed we were when Harriet was born in the middle of the night and we did not get a chance to drive you. Of course, we knew you were playing it safe and probably had a dozen others lined up to do the driving. You always played it safe didn't you?); Jimmy's having the opportunities to act under Ovid's direction brought great fun and wonderful experiences; but most of all the bonds of friendship that have supported our entire family and always carried with it words of encouragement, laughter and love.

Who would have believed that Jimmy's speech and drama professor at East Central would become one of his, and later his girlfriends, best friends. How good it was to have Ovid in Nashville to play the host, tour guide and cupid. Jimmy remembers the first night in January, 1965 when he stayed with Ovid, Miss Hattie and Miss Jeanette. That first introduction only was the beginning of wonderful experiences: riding the bus downtown Nashville to see movies like Goldfinger, drinking strong coffee made by Miss Hattie and loving every word that Miss Jeanette shared about her life in the gracious south (a visit to her "plantation" and her "negras" would have been special if Miss Jeanette had been there!).

When Joy came on the scene, Ovid came alive all over again!! My, what wonderful times and discussions we had as we viewed the civil war grounds and cemetery in Franklin climbing over the "no trespassing" area, drinking coffee and eating Krispy Kreme donuts late at night, driving home to Mississippi and seeing our friend and Ovid's girl who was waiting in Decatur. It always seemed that Ovid knew from the beginning that Jimmy and Joy were destined to be married.


How great it was to have Ovid agree to be in our wedding in Fort Pierce, Florida on July 2, 1966. We would have missed so many good stories if he had not agreed to accompany Brother Neill and Nellie! It would have been great to be in the car when Brother Neill, who would not allow any relief driver to help him, drove like a "bat out of hell" and dodged that box in the road! As always, Ovid was the center of everything with all those young bridesmaids and groomsmen. Even though he was not the youngest in the wedding party, he insisted on staying in the pool house with the boys. It was good for Jimmy to receive his last minute counsel.

Through the years we have enjoyed continuing relations through the work of the church and Carol at political functions. We treasured the time that we had with Harriet while she was in Jackson and a member of Galloway. We loved attending Nona's wedding and experiencing Ovid's and Carol's "giving her away." Although we have not lived close enough see each other often, we treasure not only the memories, but also the friendship and support both of us have received from both of you.

Now that our lives have entered a new era and we are back in Nashville, we want you to come and let's do Nashville again!! The only request is that Carol must be part of the afternoon excursions this time.

Our love and best wishes go with you as you enter a new dimension in your lives.

Love,



Joy and Jimmy Carr

April 20, 1995

Ovid Vickers
Box 58 ECCC
Decatur, MS 39327

Dear Ovid,

Has it really been 38 years since we met you as our Speech teacher at East Central? Rarely do favorite teachers also become favorite friends as we have.

So many things come to mind when we remember the past, Nona's tooth marks on our coffee table (which we still have), Harriet and Kevin, and Ovid and Cliff being so near in age and Nona teaching Kevin as a student teacher when he was in high school.

We think often of the U.S.M. football games, the visqueen tent that kept us dry during one game, watching the races and having fun visiting you all at the Neshoba County Fair. Lets spend more time together!

Enjoy your retirement. We wish for you the very best.
Thanks for the memories.

With love,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda and Keith Hudson". The ink is dark and the handwriting is fluid and personal.

Linda and Keith Hudson



THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

COMMUNICATION: Journalism • Radio, TV, Film • Speech Communication

April 12, 1995

Ovid Vickers
Box 58-ECCC
Decatur, MS 39327

Dear Ovid:

Geez! You've been at East Central 40 years and when I arrived you had been there SIX years. I'm going home and tell Linda how old she is. How I wish I had time to do a video for you, but I've been out of town for a week and the deadline for this letter is today.

Those days with you at East Central are still like yesterday to me. However, it makes me wonder how you must remember some of us. Do you remember Una walking up while I was imitating her walk with one leg on a curb? I had to repeat English the next year at USM and you told me my leg wasn't the only thing I was likely to lose if she could get her hands on me.

Those frequent walks down to the theater to watch Road Runner cartoons stand out in my mind, too. I'm sure folks back on campus could hear us laughing and cutting up in the movie theater.

Ovid, I believe the funniest thing I remember occurred before I arrived on campus. You told me that before you married you lived in the dorm, and hung out with the guys there. I believe Jimmy Wilkerson or someone from Forest was among the group. Well, someone was holding an ink pen, and when one of the guys from Forest walked through from the shower, dressed in nothing, the pen holder reached out and autographed an unmentionable part of his anatomy.

I hope great things are in store for you after retirement. Believe me, most of my fond memories (and I know the best memories of thousands of others) of East Central have you as the central character. As ol' Teddy Roosevelt yelled in "Arsenic and Old Lace," (remember my jeans popped open as I leaped over the couch) "Charge!!!" into retirement with the same energy and gusto that you had during your 40 years of teaching at East Central.

Best wishes always.

Gene Wiggins

April 7, 1995

Mr. Ovid Vickers
East Central Community College
Decatur, Mississippi 393927

Dear Mr. Vickers:

It is such an honor and a privilege to write a letter honoring your upcoming retirement. Never has a teacher been more beloved as an ECCC faculty member than you have been. You have been an ageless teacher, just as much loved and enjoyed today as you were as the new young teacher back in the 1950's.

You have touched the lives of almost everyone in my family. Beginning with my grandmother, Mrs. A. M. Blount, and going down through my parents, Clarence and Viola Blount, and then my own immediate family, Carl, Mike, Tam and myself, you have been a special friend and we have all valued your friendship.

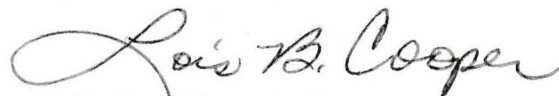
There have been times my children have asked you for advice, letters of recommendation, and other countless favors. They always felt close to Mr. Vickers and felt free to ask for those special requests.

Carl and I always knew that you were that special teacher who we were so fortunate to have for English courses. We never dreamed that both of our children would be blessed by your extraordinary teaching abilities also.

We rejoice in your retirement from "punching the clock" everyday. But, there is no doubt in our minds that you will NEVER RETIRE. We know that you will probably travel, write, keep Carol straight, and enjoy many other activities.

You have a wonderful family and we know that they will enjoy your fruitful retirement with you. Enjoy many hours at the Neshoba County Fair and share your Folk stories with the thousands of friends you have made down through the years. We know that you will be in demand as a speaker even more so now. Everyone will want to share in your retirement time.

We all love you and wish for you the very best.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lois B. Cooper". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a large initial 'L'.

Lois Blount Cooper
Class of '59



COPIAH-LINCOLN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Post Office Box 649
WESSON, MISSISSIPPI 39191

601-643-5101
FAX-601-643-8212

March 31, 1995

Mr. Ovid Vickers
Box 58-ECCC
Decatur, MS 39327

Dear Ovid,

Many people have played important factors in my life and you have certainly been a very important one. I shall always remember the experiences in your speech class. A person of less concern would have lost me and many others as students but that was not to be in your class. Your caring concern contributed to many of us giving college another try for another semester and that is what it took to get many of us over the hill.

Besides the excellent classroom experience, I have many fond memories of other activities on campus in which you were a very active part. For us as students it was very important to have a faculty member as a friend.

Who would have ever thought Bubba Hudspeth would have taken part in a stage play? But with your guidance, and in Bubba's case it may have been pressure, many students have left ECCC with a much broader and stronger background.

I feel sure your every day presence on the campus will be missed. You have earned the right to let up, but knowing you, you will be around to assist when ever needed.

Good luck and enjoy your retirement.

Your friend,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Ralph'.

Ralph Frazier

LAKE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

CHURCH STREET
LAKE, MS 39092
CHURCH OFFICE PHONE
601-775-3002



Organized 1862

DE
192

Mr. Ovid Vickers
Box 58 ECCC
Decatur, MS 39327

Dear Mr. Vickers,

Congratulations on your retirement! You have touched the lives of many persons during these 40 years at East Central Community College. Mine is one of them. I remember your Speech and Oral Interpretation classes and the plays during my "three" years at East Central but most of all I remember the sessions in the dorms and student center.

I remember your and Carol's wedding day. We promised not to "mess up" the car since it was new but I remember some of us writing a note and putting it inside the gas flap that you were newly weds.

All of my years of knowing you, thirty five of the forty, hold many pleasant memories but I remember most returning to Decatur as your pastor and the respect you treated me with and the encouragement you gave me then as well as my earlier years in the ministry. Many times you have helped me to focus and to continue.

I wish you much joy and happiness in your retirement. I know that you will stay busy. My main regret is that my children and grandchildren did not have the pleasure of sitting in one of your classes. I hope to see you each year at the Neshoba County Fair for many years to come.

A friend and former student,

Riley

Riley E. Burton, Jr.

Mr. Ovid Vickers
Box 58 ECCC
Decatur, MS 39327

Dear Mr. Vickers,

I remember vividly my first day in your class because you called me Regina, a name that had remained secret for years and is still unknown to many to this day.

Carol and I had some business courses together so I watched with great interest your courtship, marriage and the birth of your children.

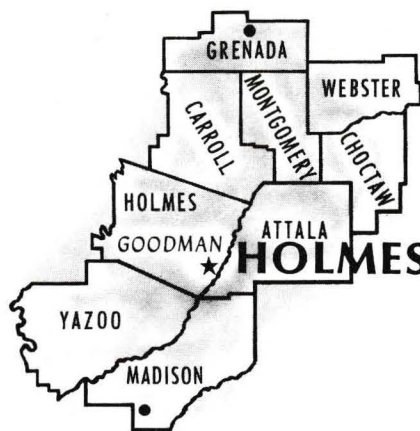
I respected and admired you as a teacher but truly came to appreciate you as a person during our years at the Decatur United Methodist Church. Your support and encouragement, along with your family, has meant so much to us and our children.

I know that your retirement will be a busy and interesting time to pursue new opportunities and hobbies. May God bless you with health and happiness.

Sincerely,

Jean

Jean (Regina) Burton



HOLMES COMMUNITY COLLEGE

P. O. Box 369
GOODMAN, MS 39079
(601) 472-2312

11 April 1995

Mr. Ovid Vickers
Box 58-ECCC
Decatur, MS 39327

Dear Mr. Vickers,

When I received Harriet's letter informing me of this scrapbook, I was honored to be a part of it and overwhelmed at the task of choosing a few memories from a hoard. So many of my childhood and college memories are adorned with the faces of you and your family, and I am thankful to have been your student and your neighbor for so many years.

Certainly, I was a student at East Central Community College long before I enrolled as a freshman in 1987. Faculty members like you, Tom Carson, and Ann Burkes took the time to give advice, to offer encouragement, to listen to my songs and poems, or to help me plunder through the library. I specifically remember one summer when I was still in grammar school; I had written a tedious little poem about the Civil War and I was typing it up in my mother's office. You came through and agreed to read it; you first offered positive comments, but then pointed out that the second stanza had little to do with the rest of the poem. Though I don't remember if I appreciated then my first lesson in composition, later I was thankful for your taking a young boy seriously enough to be honest.

To this day, I am unclear about how and why I became an English major. I entered college with no aspirations to enter my current profession. I suspect that scheduling errors left me with more English courses than required, and then as a clueless transfer to Mississippi State I declared English my major for lack of a better one. I also suspect, though, that your animated lectures on the rat-infested streets of London, Swift's "horse sense," and "writing about what you know," tacitly prompted me to study something I had always loved in the first place. I have not yet regretted it.

I cannot adequately thank you for all the kind words, the thoughtful instruction, the letters of recommendation, and the phone calls on my behalf. Most of all, you have given me and a host of others the gift that the truly great teachers give their students: you have awakened our curiosity and taught us to think and to learn for ourselves--to become our own teachers for the rest of our lives. I am sure that the other letters in this scrapbook are all evidence of your right to say as Walt Whitman says: "I am the teacher of athletes,/. . ./He most honors my style who learns under it to destroy the teacher." Thank you for this gift.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S P Deaton', written over the printed name.

Steven P. Deaton

[REDACTED]

Ovid Vickers
Scott County Times
Forest, MS 39074

Dear Mr. Vickers,

Congratulations on your wonderful career as an educator and as the person who filled many young lives with literature that was not only written words, but wonderful thoughts and ideas that really came to life as you told colorful stories to make a point and to make each story come to life.

I don't remember the reason for the dance, but I think you were demonstrating something about spring festivals, and you dancing around the classroom and pretending to be a flower dancing in the wind. I can still see you doing that today, a mere twenty-two years later.

You really did bring literature, especially Shakespeare, to life for me and I would like to say thank you. Today I still pick up my old English literature book and look at all the notes that I wrote in the margins.

I'm glad that you haven't put away your pen and paper and that you are writing for the Times. I've enjoyed reading all the articles that you have written. Especially the one about the burlesque dancer. I just wonder if there is any one that attended E. C. J. C. with me that could get upon the stage and twirl two tassels in different directions. The names that come to mind that had the desire, I don't think had the bodies to go with the desire.

I especially enjoyed the story that you wrote for the magazine MISSISSIPPI about the flower pots that grandmothers made out of everything that started to leak in the kitchen, and couldn't be repaired. My mother was one of those unique "pot" gardeners who had plants in old coffee pots, in old dishpans, and in any kind of container that would hold dirt.

Even as a teacher of male prison inmates, I sometimes use some of the drama that I got from you to get a point across to them. They often think I'm a little crazy, but after getting to know me they just take it for granted that I really am a little "touched." I think you have to be to work in an all male prison.

I really have found it to be a fulfilling job. I never in my wildest dreams thought that I would ever teach murderers, thieves, rapists, and drug dealers. Until six years ago they were simply men who had committed crimes and they were not really personalities at all.

Now, that has all changed. They really do have feelings, ideas, sense of humors, and can change your thinking about a lot of things. They can sometimes make you take a good look at yourself and make you wonder what you would have done if you had been put into their situations. It really does make you think.

Mr. Vickers, if you ever come to East Texas, please give me a call and come by to see me. I would love to take you to my classroom and let you see who I deal with every day. (Wonder if any of my old classmates are in prison somewhere? Makes you think doesn't it?)

Keep writing. Don't ever put away your wit and sense of humor.

If you are ever out this way, please call me. My number is 903-729-8243.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bunda".

Brenda Tucker Wilbanks

To My Favorite Teacher.

I do not blame him one bit,deciding to retire,
When old women come back to school,their knowledge to refire
He sure has lots of patience,on him you can depend,
For you are certain to stay in class,until the very end.

Not one paper he gives untill the bell does ring,
You'll just have to stay in class until you get the thing.
Not many are late for his class,cause it's against his will.
He wishes every one on time,or he will show his--skill.

"I wonder why you're late for class," you will hear him say,
"To many times of this,will soon count up a day.
You will see rushing up the stairs,as fast as they can climb,
Here I come hobbling on,not very far behind.

One day I folled' around,came in a little late,
"What's wrong with you Mrs Graham you're late today"
"Just folling around," was all that I could say.

Every one at E.C.C.C Will miss him very much ,
Because it just takes him,to give the final touch.
An office they should give,for him to reside
There's lots and lots of questions,for young folk to confide.

L.G. 4-11-95

He's reason one that I am still here

For I never thought I would.

But he gave me thoughts to think,

That maby, I just should.

He is my favorite teacher,

And I'm sure he'll always be,

From day to day, and class to class ,

He has meant a lot to me.

By Lorene Graham

22829

May 11, 1995

Dear Mr. Vickers:

Congratulations on your upcoming retirement. My Mama has always said that the thing she missed most was working with the kids (students). In your interview you say the same thing. I truly enjoyed the article - Couldn't believe you left out someone carrying an automobile motor up the stairs for a speech demonstration or someone (it may have been Jimmy Carr) getting up for a speech and announcing "I am an illegitimate child". In the 60's that was a shocker - today you'd probably get little shock value from it.

You know, somehow I just lost touch with EGCC - don't know why. I always thought I'd be a Mississippian my whole life. Companies have a way of changing all that! So when I do get home I devote almost all my time to visiting Mama. She does come visit fairly often but @ 83 she's getting to the point she's a little afraid of traveling by herself. Enough rambling!

22829

Anyway, my thoughts are with you -
Hope you enjoy every second in
retirement. Do you plan to travel -
teach a little - write more books, etc?

Guess the last time I saw you was
at Daddys funeral - so many people
I hardly spoke to so many. I think of
it often - in those two days I saw
people I hadn't seen in twenty years.
Somehow you just ^{can't} stay in touch with
all of them. If during your retirement
you're ever in Central Florida - We're
the URBS of Tampa - 1 1/2 hrs. from
Disney - please come see us.

Again, congratulations.

With kindest regards,

Tommy Carr

May 12, 1995

Hello:

Has it really been 40 years? What a wonderful surprise to see in the April issue of "The Warrior" that Ovid Vickers was to be honored for his many years of service to East Central by renaming the Fine Arts Center. When I had finished reading the article I found myself wondering how you had time to accomplish so much. Then I remembered something that I had read about the word "begin" by a Welsh clergyman. It went something like this. "The word *"begin"* is full of energy. The best way to get something done is to begin. It's truly amazing what tasks we can accomplish if only we begin. You're never finished if you forever keep beginning."

I certainly did not want to miss sending my congratulations to you for all of your accomplishments.

I have greatly enjoyed the issues of "The Warrior". When I sit down to read through the pages it gives me moments to reflect back on my short time at East Central and all of the wonderful memories, all of my classmates, and decisions for paths that would forever change my life.

Today I have a deep sense that I am exactly where I am supposed to be in my life. I truly enjoy my life, my work and responsibilities. I suppose that it what a happy life is all about. I have had the responsibilities as the pastor's secretary, church secretary and financial secretary for seven years. They tell me the only way to get out of this job is to die. So I have agreed to stay as long as I can remember how to get to work and who I am. I do not have to work on Mondays and that gives me time to work in our yard and garden. We had our backyard Wildlife Certified a few years back. We have a great deal of fun watching the birds who come to feed and nest. There are still a few rabbits, turtles and other critters who happen to come through and sometimes stay awhile. Last year we added a water garden complete with water falls, koi, comets, goldfish and a few other varieties. We even have a resident frog. He is quite a character. Ron wanted to add an old fashioned swing so we could sit and listen to the sound of the water. It is quite peaceful when we have time to sit.

The church has a new pastor as of August, 1994. It has certainly been interesting. He was bi-vocational (worked in management with Colonial Bakery) until he was called by this church to fill the pulpit which had been vacant for over fourteen months. He had never had a secretary before. It has been fun watching him trying to sort everything out, down and up. I have no doubt that he will be fine in another few months. He has certainly brought fire into this church and it is growing fast. The church had 365 (one for each day of the year) resident members when he came and they have added fourteen or more in the last few months.

Even with all the budget cuts, my husband, Ron, is still hanging on to his job at Fort Gordon. He is Facilities Manager for the Fort and responsible for around nine million square feet of building space. This last budget cut was pretty scary. They actually did away with around 290 job slots. Many of those folks were able to retire, but not all. Ron needs a few more years to be able to retire. Perhaps he can make it, if the stress doesn't get him first.

My son, Todd, is still in Atlanta. He works for Kaiser Permanente as a computer analyst. He loves working with computers. He told me recently he would never get married and would never have children. I laughed and explained that it was his life and he lived in a country where he was free to choose. He certainly not obligated to acquire a wife and have children. I could not resist reminding him that he could still meet someone he thought he couldn't live without. In the meantime, he has met someone he wants to bring home for us to meet. Now this could be interesting. Even though it is not the first young lady he had been smitten by.

I do recall once in class you told us that there were three things we should do in life. I can't remember who told it to you. Was it your father? "Dig a ditch, plant a tree and raise a son." Well, I have done those three things and I have to admit that it was quite a challenge.

I read that David Howell is president of the Alumni Association. I can't tell by the picture if it is the David Howell I was engaged to when I first entered East Central. Did he attend East Central? He was from Carthage and a high school senior in the fall of 1955. I do believe he did marry an East Central girl. I can see her face, but I cannot recall her name. If it is the girl I think, she and I were members of the centralettes our last year at East Central.

When I realized Ms. Barber was still in the Decatur area I gave her a call. I thought she has retired to Burns. We had very nice chat. She asked that I write to her and I will, but perhaps it would be fun to call her again in the near future. I regret that she has lost her sight and cannot get around very well. I just wanted to tell her a few things before the opportunity was gone. I have found deep satisfaction in taking the time to say what's in my hearts.

From all the letters that have been printed in "The Warrior" from graduates I would say that East Central has had rewarding influence on many. I know that you will be missed in the classroom, but I also know that your legacy will live just as did Ms. Stella Newsome's. It must be a wonderful and rewarding feeling. There are times when I wished I could sit down and have a talk with Ms. Stella, just like I did as a young girl.

I have more than said congratulations! I know that Carol and the children are very proud of you and so are the many students whose lives you influenced.

Take a moment to write and tell me about the dedication of the Fine Arts Center. Ms. Barber was very excited and concerned about being able to attend. I do hope she was able to do so.

My high school class is planning a reunion this year around fair time, if they can get it together. We have not made any plans as yet. My sister still lives in Philadelphia and would love to have us visit. There are so many things to do in order to make a long trip for an extended period of time. We have two cats, one is thirteen and the other is twelve years old. The twelve year old is diabetic and must received insulin shots every day. I know, I know, but I would have to find someone who can care for him properly. His name is Dusty and has the most beautiful blue eyes and weighs about sixteen pounds. He's what is consider an exotic short hair, a cross between a Siamese and Himalayan.

I must stop and finish my church bulletin for this Sunday. Should you and Carol ever have an opportunity to visit the Augusta area, please know our home is open to you.

Sincerely,

Alice M. (Gipson) Couch

P.S. I just addressed the envelope to East Central Junior College. I hope you get it!

Mr. Vickers -

I am so sorry I was unable to attend the dedication services last weekend. I was in Alabama for wedding festivities.

Mother said that the program was extremely well-attended. I was certain that it would be because of the many lives you've touched during your years at East Central. I certainly include myself in that number.

I appreciate all you've done for me both as a teacher and friend. I can think of no one more deserving of such an honor than you.

Wishing You
Every Happiness in
Your Retirement

With warmest regards-

Melissa Thrash

There are so many things to do in my life right now. I have not made any plans as yet. My sister still lives in the high school class is planning a reunion this year around fall time, if they are able to do so. Mrs. Barber was very excited and concerned about being able to attend. I do hope I take a moment to write and tell me about the dedication of the Fine Arts Center.

July 4, 1995

Dear Mr. Vickers,

Congratulations on the Ovid Sparks Vickers Fine Arts Center at East Central Community College. Congratulations on your retirement. Congratulations on your column in *The Scott County Times*. I cannot imagine how you find the time to write a column. It takes me so long just to write a letter.

When I was a girl I could sit down and knock out a letter in 5 minutes tops. I wrote 5-minute letters to Rin Tin Tin and to Black Beauty for reasons which certainly require no explanation. And I wrote one to Gene Autry because once, on his way to Memphis to sing on the radio (WREC), he had stopped in at the American Legion hut in Stuttgart, Arkansas and danced the first dance with my mother. I got autographed pictures back from Rin Tin Tin and Black Beauty.

In high school, a letter took 12 minutes, 5 to compose on lined notebook paper, 5 to copy in my practiced feminine script. A ruler kept the lines straight, so 2 minutes to go back through and finish the tails on the g's and p's and y's. I used pale blue-tinted stationery from Ott's Drug Store where a nickle bought an ice cream cone, choice of two flavors. Skipping the ice cream and adding a dime I could buy a paperback novel. But then I had to leave by the back door to avoid the novel-disapproving eyes of my grandfather who sat on the loafer's bench in front of Ott's with *The Scott County Times* columnist Frisky Roland's grandfather. One of them was always telling a story, and another old gentleman was forever whittling on a thumbsized (always the same size) piece of wood with his elegant Case pocketknife.

I wrote a 12-minute letter every day my last two years of high school. To an army boy from Leesburg who must have been homesick, for he sent no photos of army life, but green foliage, springtime pictures. The countryside around Bremerhaven, Germany could almost match Scott County for tall trees, curving hills, smooth lakes with swans and weeping willows. He felt closer to home there than he had in boot camp at Fort Hood, Texas, hot, flat country broken by deep gulches, normally dry but (with no topsoil to soak up the water when it did rain) subject to flash flooding, which had to have been hard on a Mississippi boy. He bumped into another Mississippi boy at Fort Hood, who wrote his name on the back of a wallet-sized snapshot of me in pedal pushers and ponytail posed self-consciously under a pear tree in my parents' front yard on Agnew Street in Morton.

I carried Elvis' autograph in my wallet through East Central Junior College where I was a P.E. Major in love with Miss Wood's classes and so homesick my first time away that letters home to Mother, to Billy Ray Tadlock, to Ted Hannah took 15 minutes.

I carried the autograph through Delta State ('61-'63) where I wrote 30-minute letters to a boy at East Central who was messing up my dreams bigtime. I was a Drama Major then. The last semester of my senior year Dr. Ralph Hitt told me adding his 18th Century

Literature and Dr. Butler's course on John Milton would give me enough hours for a double major (English and Drama). I took his advice, and Dr. Hitt recommended me to LSU graduate school for a three-year English scholarship.

I carried Elvis' autograph through Louisiana State University where there was little time for letter-writing. My Mississippi education was a fine one, but a three-year scholarship meant nonstop reading if I expected to get a masters and a doctorate before the money ran out. I was competing with students some of whom had been reading the classics before I was born.

Putting myself through school (band scholarships and work: sweeping Mr. Gerald Wells' art classroom and Mr. Fick's band hall the first year, grading papers for you the second year, library work my two years at Delta State), I had not read for pleasure since the Zane Gray and Frank Yerby paperbacks from Ott's Drug Store--oh yes and passages in *Lady Chatterly's Lover* Paul Eaves underlined while working lights for *The Diary of Ann Frank*.

So at LSU, I was playing catch-up ball--in breadth. Not depth. Thanks to you and Miss Una Harris I knew British and American Literature. Thanks to Ralph Hitt I passed my doctoral exams never needing a graduate course in 18th Century Lit. As for Dr. Maria H. Butler--her courses are legendary. Back then everybody read a few of Milton's short poems and the first two books of *Paradise Lost*. I think I was the only person at LSU who had read the entire twelve books and *Paradise Regained*. And I have never met another human being who has read all of *Samson Agonistes*.

All this time I carried Elvis' autograph in my wallet, showing it to no more than one or two people. You remember how quiet I was and introverted, traits confirmed Christmas Eve '66 when my fiancée took me to Lafayette, Louisiana to meet his mother. We went out to celebrate our engagement at The Blue Note--my first taste of nightlife, soured when my purse (That signature!) was stolen while we were dancing.

A couple of years later in Las Vegas, Caesar's Palace I think, we sat at a table in the back corner of the largest room I'd ever been in. A svelte Elvis stood on stage in black pants and red shirt and sang. To me. It wasn't just that he looked over the heads of a thousand people (or so it seemed to a Mississippi girl still unused to crowds) back to our corner and straight into my eyes. It was his voice. You know the one-on-one tone in the kitchen at midnight talking to someone you love about something that matters. It wasn't in his talking voice between songs. But when he sang, it was there. He was there. I was there. And nobody else was in the room.

My letters were up to an hour by this time. There was so much to tell. I had married, graduated from LSU, and was teaching at Loyola University in New Orleans, hired by John William Corrington, poet and professor when I met him. While I knew him he would become a novelist, lawyer and writer of novellas, short stories, screenplays (*The Omega Man*, *The Battle for the Planet of the Apes*), soap operas (*Search for Tomorrow*, *Another World*, *One Life to Live*, *General Hospital*), and the Hallmark Hall of Fame movie, *Decoration Day* with James Garner. Bill Corrington grew up in Shreveport and was a life-long aficionado of The War Between

the States. He called it "Our War" and named one of his sons for Stonewall Jackson. I think the reason he hired me over the other applicants was that I was from Mississippi, the state that had produced the Ole Miss class who joined as a unit, fought as a unit, and died as a unit at Gettysburg, the story of which he repeated often, seated in the only other chair in my office while people gathered in the hall, posing as students waiting for a conference, to listen with rapturous faces. He was almost as spell-binding, almost as good a storyteller as you are, Mr. Ovid S. (for sex--Do you remember telling us that?) Vickers.

I wrote Mother an hour-long letter my first year at Loyola about sharing an office with novelist Walker Percy who never recognized me as his office mate but always acted surprised to see me, addressed me as though I were an intrusive student, informed me that I (his office mate) was out and instructed me to wait for myself in the hall. I reintroduced myself to him again and again. Looking back now I realize that he could hardly have failed to recognize me--I was pregnant that year with my Patrick.

It took much longer than an hour to write (though often never mailed) about the prejudice outside Mississippi (Bill Corrington one shining exception) against Mississippians. Also there exists some strange snobbery that stereotypes southern speech as intellectually inferior. By chance I discovered that one of my colleagues, using a British accent to pass himself off as an Englishman, had grown up in Alabama. And when a colleague from Boston (her Ph.D. from Berkeley) snottily asked me what I, a professor, was going to do about my drawl, I told her I planned to cultivate it. (Which I have--their prejudice not my problem.)

By the time I left New Orleans in '77 to teach at Incarnate Word College in San Antonio, a letter could take me all day. You'd think it would get easier, wouldn't you, and that one would get faster, more proficient? But no, the situation has in fact worsened over the years, so that now it takes months.

For instance, I began this letter to you in my head back in January about the time Devi my granddaughter (looks just like me) celebrated her first birthday. I added to it in February when you wrote that you were beginning your last semester of teaching. I told you what a difference you had made in my life, how I owed you so much for seeing something in me worth encouraging, and would never forget the wonder of being in your plays. On March 4, my sister Jean's birthday, I added how she loved being at ECJC. Do stop and say hello to Jean, her husband Roger, and son Kevin McKay next month at the Neshoba County Fair. You'll find them on (Jean's ECJC roommate) Patsy and Gilbert Donald's front porch.

I added a paragraph or two to your letter on April 27, 27th birthday of my Patrick, a tall, brown-eyed man with character already in his face. Picture him sitting sideways in an old flower-backed oak chair bought on Magazine Street in New Orleans, legs too long to go under my dining room table. It is spread with a handmade white flower-patterned tablecloth bought in Mexico City the day he was conceived.

Perched prim as a kildee on his lap, his 15-month-old daughter, Devi, in a white floral party dress, her demure smile itself a flower. Slowly she lifts her arm over her head, though

not stopping at the end of a ladylike stretch but curving the arm down like a lazy swan's neck until her baby fingertips are almost ready to close on the black wick of a birthday candle in her father's cake. She looks a shy question into his eyes. It is all right. The candles are cool now. He has already huffed and puffed and blown them all out. With a slow natural ballet grace she did not get from me, her delicate fingers pluck the candle as though it were a petunia. She brings it to her dainty lips, sucks icing, starts chewing on the wax. My girl, through and through.

I added timely, hearty Congratulations on May 6. Back in October I had agreed to be in a friend's wedding on that day. So I stood in a long blue dress on the banks of the Guadalupe River under tall cypress trees reading a poem I had written for the occasion. But I wanted to be in Decatur, Mississippi. I wanted to see Linda Lea Glasgow, Dot Kern, Jimmy Gibbs, Zerelda (Zee) Ogeron Williams, Larry Hogue, Nancy Eaves, Johnny Walton, Hilda Adair, Tony and Larry Henderson, Charlotte and Gene Tate, Nan Harbor, Malcolm Massey, Brenda Whatley, Corinne Cross Neal, Henry Dean and the Hortons, Patsy Clark, Coach Denver Brackeen, Melvin Tingle, Alice Pouncey, the Hannahs and Dr. Eddie Smith. I wanted to bring you flowers. I wanted to knight you. Or at least make a speech in your honor, read a poem, something.


Last week Mother sent me your first column in *The Scott County Times*, and my letter grew, asking you to share with your readers some of Martha Cleveland's first grader tales. Before I forget, I want to subscribe. Please ask Sid Salter from Beulah Hubbard to put my name on the mailing list and bill me. Oh, and thanks a million (*mil gracias* we say in San Antonio) for sharing with us the pinecone turkey Martha's son Patrick made for you when he was five. My Patrick did an abstract finger-painting entitled Mardi Gras when he was four that should be hanging in the Louve in Paris, France today, it is that good.

Hello to Pat Cleveland and Melanie, to Paula Salter and to your own Carol, Nona, Harriet and Ovid, all of whom I hope you'll be writing about. Hello to everyone in Decatur and in Morton. Hello to everyone in Scott County except Forest. I'm not speaking to Forest for the shabby way they played ball against the Morton Panthers in 1959. Ordinarily I'm not one to hold a grudge, but you ask Truman Manning or Kenneth (Choctaw) McCullough or Arthur Coward or Bill Richardson or William Richardson...you ask Judge Alfred George (Nicky) Nicols (you know you'll get the truth from a judge) if those Forest boys treated us right that last game of the season.

Love,

Jo

Jo (Agnew) LeCoeur



April 3, 1995

Mr. Ovid Vickers,
Box 58 ECCC
Decatur, MS 39327

Dear Mr. Vickers,

Congratulations on your retirement and your successful years at ECCC.
I treasure the friendship of you and your family.

There are many things I remember about our association but one stands out in my mind, In the spring of 1972, a small private high school at House, MS, was having their Junior-Senior banquet at Philadelphia, MS. You had taught most of the faculty at that school and they asked you to be their speaker that night.

At that time I thought that you could not drive. I later found out you could, but that is another story. You asked me to drive you to Philadelphia and I said I would. On the way I got to thinking what if these people had not prepared for me in the areas of food and a place to sit at the table. I did not want to embarrass them if they had only prepared for one person. I related my fears to you and asked what we should do. You looked at me and said, "Do not worry Pat. If a problem arises I will simply tell them that this is my son of whom I am well pleased." Nothing happened and the night went off fine.

Good luck and may God bless you.

Your friend,

Pat Cleveland

Pat Cleveland

April 3, 1995

Mr. Ovid Vickers
Box 58 ECCC
Decatur, MS 39327

Dear Mr. Vickers,

Congratulations on a very successful teaching career at ECCC. My family has certainly enjoyed being your students, your friends, and your guests at times throughout our lives.

Many memories flood my mind as I remember some of the things we have done together. Two trips stand out in my mind. One was to Nashville in a pick up truck to get furniture from your Aunt Hattie and Aunt Jeanette. Another was to New Orleans with Carol and you. By the way, that was my first trip to that city.

Each time we traveled together, whether near or far, numerous people would always recognize you and have kind things to say. Your concern for your students and your genuine interest in people have left you with a world of people that care for you. Also, your talent for communication with people in all walks of life has been evident each time I have been in your company.

Many times you would say to Pat and me, over a cup of coffee at your kitchen table, listen to what I tell you. Usually this was advice about life. You encouraged us to start our Master's degrees when we first started teaching. This has made our careers easier because of the timing, location, and age that we were then.

I hope that retirement will be just another long journey for you. May God continue to bless you with good health and good times.

Love,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Martha Cleveland". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a large initial 'M' and a long, sweeping underline.

Martha Cleveland

[REDACTED]

April 13, 1995

Mr. Ovid Vickers
East Central Community College
Post Office Box 58
Decatur, Mississippi 39327

Dear Mr. Vickers;

"D"

"D-I . . . , D-E, D-I-E . . . , D-I-A-N . . . , D-I-N-A!"

"Hi-you-spella-dinahsoarh?"

Whether a child looking over the back of a seat in a train and struggling with spelling, or a little white woman in Canton, or a sweet, portly, grandmother with a halo of white hair and befouled with an unexpected bad mouth, the serendipity of human foibles is always enhanced by sharing them with friends.

I recall years ago visiting with you and Carol when Harriet was quite small. She was in another part of the house as we three sat around the kitchen table and told story after story interspersed with gales of laughter. The next day (according to the follow-up story) Harriet said to Carol: "Mama, who was that man who was here last night? He sure made my Daddy laugh a lot!" Such is the great fun of exchanging bits of humor, that most marvelous of senses we hold in common.

I commend you for forty years of service to the people of East Central Mississippi. And if my commendation centered on trying to spell O-V-I-D V-I-C-K-E-R-S, it would end up with something like *j-o-i-e d-e v-i-v-r-e*. For it is in the recounting of tales and happenings with friends that one person's joy spills over to another and becomes a full measure pressed down and running over. I appreciate you for never having lost the joy of living and teaching and learning and sharing.

I thank you for being my friend for thirty-nine years during your sojourn in Mississippi and your tenure at East Central. The exact time of thirty-nine years I remember since today thirty-nine years ago I graduated from Union High School and in the Fall I enrolled at East Central. But that is a whole 'nother series of stories to be shared in due course around the dining table!

Kindest regards,


Milton Matthews

May 2, 1995

Dear Mr. Vickers,

Nothing but my daughter's college graduation would keep me from attending the ceremony for you this coming weekend. I am deeply saddened that you are leaving the profession but overjoyed that your excellence and longevity are being acknowledged. I wish I could be there.

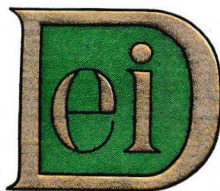
Ovid, you challenged, inspired, you even taunted this country boy who is writing to you now. I love, I respect, I appreciate your doing so. Your knowledge was broad and deep and you were so doggone much fun. I will never forget you. I can't think of not ever seeing you again.

In fact, I hope I can soon. Because I have one more year to go to make 30 years of teaching, I told Eddie I couldn't consider going to ECCC for the 95-96 year, but that I most certainly would like to be considered the next year, if there is a vacancy. I appreciate the confidence in me which your phone call expressed. On my application I wrote that I am an incurable English major and that I have an emotional interest in returning to Mississippi and to ECCC. You are largely the reason.

God bless you, Ovid. I loved Carol also. She and I had a linguistics class at USM together one summer. Give her my love. For 29 years of teaching English you have been to me a positive haunt. You have perched on my shoulders, and I should have told you long ago.

Have a great week-end. You deserve it and more!

Love always,
Roger Hines



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May 12, 1995

Ovid Vickers
c/o East Central Community College
P. O. Box 129
Decatur, MS 39327

Dear Mr. Vickers:

Please accept this short letter as my congratulations on the dedication of the Fine Arts Building to your name. The dedication and ceremony which accompanied it were a well deserved reward for the man who so willingly devoted his life to the education of youth. You have served your community and your family well. I am proud of my professor and mentor but most of all I am proud of my friend. Thank you for the honor of a personal invitation to the program. It will be remembered for a long time to come.

Time passes us by so quickly it seems. Thank goodness for men like yourself who make us stand up and look to take advantage of the opportunities around us; not be limited by them as so often happens in small communities like Union, Mississippi. Not a single day goes by that I am not thankful that you asked your students to examine the whole world and not just the part in front of their eyes. Your personal interest in me helped to develop a character and confidence which has allowed me to interact with people all over the world and deal with situations which many members of my family and community will never appreciate or understand.

You are so much more to me than just a "Professor of English and Literature", you are a "Professor of the World". Thank you so much for caring about me and what I was to become. Thank you for helping to make sure that my two years at East Central Junior College became two of the most important years of my life. Most of all, Thank you for keeping up with my life and your genuine concern even to this day.

I am enclosing a small family picture just to show you the wife and two lovely children the Lord has blessed me with. One can only hope that they find someone like yourself to give them proper direction as they enter school years. After you settle into your retirement, I will expect you to come visit me. My home will be open to you and your family at any time.

The "Wonders Series" is currently displaying the "Emperors of China" at the Convention Center. You probably would find it interesting as well as a few other cultural events coming this summer. Again, it was good to see you last weekend and congratulations upon receiving the recognition you truly deserve.

Best wishes,

Perry Winstead

May 15, 1995

Dear Mr. Vickers,

Your long years of service to East Central - & to thousands of students like me - has justly been rewarded! I only wish I had given the newsletter a little earlier, & I would have needed it for the celebration / dedication!

I wish for you & Carol a long, healthy & happy retirement. The next time I see at the Nebraska County Fair I will certainly seek out your cabin.

East Central won't be the same without you. I'll always picture you gliding across the floor in the student union. You were (& still are, I presume) some dancer!!

Affectionately
Ken Harmon Buehly

Mr. Vickers,

Now that your teaching duties are completed at E.C. I know that you are ready to get on with the second stage of your life. To think that your schedule is going to slow down is unrealistic. In fact, you may find yourself busier now than ever before.

As a former student that always enjoyed your classes, I wish you the best of luck in the future. I know your "Retirement" will be as rewarding as your previous years.

Sincerely
Dany Collins



Friends

BECKY SMITH
OFFICE MANAGER

**WINSTON COUNTY JOURNAL
& SHOPPER'S GUIDE**

119 NORTH COURT AVENUE
P. O. BOX 469
LOUISVILLE, MISSISSIPPI 39339
PHONE: 601/773-6241
FAX: 601/773-6242

Wednesday, May 3, 1995

Ovid Vickers,
East Central Community College
Decatur, MS 39327

Dear Ovid,

Sitting here at my computer and trying to think of what I could possibly say to you on your retirement is not easy. I can't even imagine you retired!

It seems only yesterday that you came into our lives at Stallo. Little did we know at that time how lucky we were to have you in our Farish family. You have been so very important to each family member but I think especially the Smith family.

Over the years you have been our confidant, traveling companion, sometimes our financial advisor, but above all our friend.

Jerry and I both want to say thanks for being there when we need someone to lean on.

Congratulations on your retirement. If we can get Jerry to take some time off we'll see if we can plan a trip and maybe even wait on "de grits!"

Sincerely,



Becky

BELVIN'S
FURNITURE, APPLIANCE AND MONUMENT CO.

RHINE, GEORGIA 31077

April 13, 1995

Dear Ovid,

If I were to write all the fond memories that come to my mind when I think of our friendship with you through the years, You could write a book!

Your teaching career began in our fair town of Rhine, and truly it is wonderful to think of all the stories (real and "souped up") that you and Belvin could come up with. I think I learned more about Rhine as Belvin would tell you happenings of the past than I ever did in other ways. So when you write about Rhine in your many articles, it renews all those good times.

Do you remember the plastic water pitcher that you "talked" with the cover as you pressed it down? You'd tell us all about what Mrs. Lula Wilcox and Bernice (Wilcox) Worley had said and done with the "talking pitcher". They lived next to Myrtle Brown's family and you learned first hand if there was a fire, a killing, a divorce, or a man running around on his wife along with the other things Bernice knew.

BELVIN'S
FURNITURE, APPLIANCE AND MONUMENT CO.

RHINE, GEORGIA 31077

Our Chaperoning the Senior Class to New York was my first stay away from home for any length of time after I got married. I remember well that I didn't have enough spending money on the trip and you loaned me some money.

It was another enjoyable time when you were our Grand Marshal for our Pondtown Festival Parade. You and Carol stayed with us, and gave me the lovely straw basket which I have on my table in the foyer on the bottom shelf. It reminds me of those College girls as well as Carol and Ovid. They (Alicia (your) Wilson and all her Young Harris friends) enjoyed every minute listening to Rhine's outstanding happenings.

I still say that Rhine is the best place in the world to come to your aid in times of need or troubles. We'll never live part of those past happenings down, but Belvin and I loved it with our whole being.

BELVIN'S
FURNITURE, APPLIANCE AND MONUMENT CO.
RHINE, GEORGIA 31077

I also remember the very nice letter that you wrote to me following his death on August 12, 1994 and the generous check you gave toward our church sound system in his memory. You had thought the Pondtown Festival would still be going but no one picked it up this year and that was why I gave it to the Church instead.

Belvin had told several about how much he enjoyed your talk at the C. of C. meeting in Eastman. We enjoyed your quick visit when you and your son, Ovid III, came to Hawkinsville. I'm so happy you took time to come by.

Now that you're retiring, tell Carol that she must help you keep those promises about coming to see us all.

You have an "Open Door Policy" always at our house. My sister, Ruby, lives with me now.

With fond memories and best wishes,
Lucile Conley

Luttrell, Mississippi
April 25, 1995

Dear Mr. Vickers,

Congratulations on forty years of continuous teaching!! What a legacy!! What an influence on so many lives! I am sure that a day never passes that many students don't recollect some comment, some story, or some event in which Ovid Vickers was the "key player", thereby affecting their lives every day.

I dare say that many students "loved" you, "loved" the classes you taught, and stood in awe of your gift for making "learning" interesting—more than any teacher we have ever known. I find myself telling my children "tales", (I hope they think they're tales), of East Central — and that name Vickers is synonymous with East Central.

You were an inspiration to me to "aspire". You did a wonderful job of teaching us to believe in ourselves. Life at East Central was not "university social organization" nor "metropolitan society" — but, oh, how we laughed and loved "life's little happenings."

When you, Mr. Vickers, think about how many lives you have touched from every ability level, from every interest level, from every level of culture, you must swell with pride, realizing that those values will be passed on to generations to come. Thanks for the opportunity.

Fondly,
Hilda Blankledge

April 5, 1995

Mr. Ovid Vickers
Box 58 ECCC
Decatur, MS 39327

Dear Mr. Vickers,

Congratulations on your retirement and the end of a long teaching career. Since I never had the pleasure of attending any of your classes, most of my memories involving you are from the fair.

I could always find a warm friend and a cool drink within the confines of Obe's Acres. Once I won a large stuffed, black panther on the midway. I'll never forget what you asked me when I got back to the cabin. You said, "Patrick, where did you get that puma?"

Thank you for being such a wonderful friend and good luck as you enter the next stage of your life.

Sincerely,

Patrick Cleveland

Patrick Cleveland

April 5, 1995

Mr. Ovid Vickers
Box 58 ECCC
Decatur, MS 39327

Dear Mr. Vickers,

Congratulations on your retirement and your successful teaching years at ECCC. You and your family have always been a positive influence on my life and here is one of my memories, especially, about you.

At the Neshoba County Fair, when I was six years old, you would take me to ride the ferris wheel. I always wanted to go about noon because they would let you ride for a really long time when they weren't busy. You were always willing to go and you would refer to me as "Miss Melanie." You would say, "Miss Melanie, do you have your purse?"

Good luck on your retirement and I hope to see you at the fair for many years to come.

Sincerely,

Melanie Cleveland

Melanie Cleveland

ERLE JOHNSTON

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

April 13, 1995

Mr. Ovid Vickers
Teacher-Playwright-Poet-Historian
East Central Community College
Decatur, Miss. 39327

Dear Mr. Vickers:

I read the long story about you thoroughly, learning many things about your talents I had not known before. I would like to emphasize Dr. Eddie Smith's remark, "There never will be another Ovid Vickers on this campus," and extend it to say that there never will be another Ovid Vickers anywhere in the United States!

Surely you have carved a career at ECCC that never can be exceeded or even duplicated.

It is certainly a nice honor to have the Fine Arts Center bear your name but really, if I had anything to do with it, I would switch the name of the college itself to Ovid Vickers Community College.

I hope you get some rest in your retirement but I know you won't. Your active brain and firm body will be getting into something to keep you busy. I know you will do speeches, because you are so good at it. Rotarians here frequently refer to the time you gave us such a good program.

You have meant a lot to a lot of people, including members of my family. We'll never forget.

Sincerely,


Erle Johnston

ERLE JOHNSTON

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

June 5, 1995

Mr. Ovid S. Vickers
Decatur, Miss. 39327

Dear Mr. Vickers:

Fay and I saw it all, from the ceremony in the auditorium, and your excellent response, to the impressive unveiling and the big reception. We enjoyed every word, every minute, every scene. Truly you were given accolades well deserved after forty years of dedicated service, climaxed with having the Fine Arts Center bearing your name.

You have made such a difference in so many peoples' lives, it is rather difficult to imagine life going on without your involvement. But knowing you, I am sure you will be active in many ways to continue the Vickers legend.

We enjoyed visiting with Harriett at Vicksburg during the CPRAM convention. She looks great, and I know she is doing a wonderful job for Hinds.

Best wishe to you and your family,


Erle Johnston



THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

April 3, 1995

Mr. Ovid S. Vickers
[REDACTED]

Dear Ovid:

Congratulations on your forthcoming retirement!

On behalf of all of us at The University of Southern Mississippi, please accept our thanks for the very significant role you have played over these many years in preparing students who later came to USM for additional study. East Central and USM have been fortunate to have someone of your commitment and thoroughness to teach our students.

Your contributions to the preservation and understanding of Mississippi folklore are deserving of our appreciation, and I hope that in retirement from your full-time faculty position you will continue those interests.

Ella and I send our best wishes to you and Carol for much happiness in the years ahead. Remember that you are always welcome at our house.

Thanks for your friendship.

Yours very sincerely,

**Aubrey K. Lucas
President**

AKL/jbt



THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Mississippi Conference
Hattiesburg District
Post Office Box 2057
Hattiesburg, Mississippi 39403

HENRY G. WINSTEAD
District Superintendent

April 8, 1995

Office Telephone (601) 264-7825
Home Telephone (601) 545-7264

Mr. Ovid Vickers
Box 58-ECCC
Decatur, MS 39327

Dear Ovid,

Congratulations on your upcoming retirement. It is hard to imagine East Central Community College without Ovid Vickers to encourage and inspire its' students. We only hope that retirement means that you'll have time to write down all those wonderful stories that you used to tell, and that you'll have time to visit old friends. We especially hope that you'll spend some time at our house in Hattiesburg.

One of the real joys of the ministry is the opportunity to serve in different churches and to meet so many people. Getting to know you, Carol and your family was a special blessing for us. You made our stay in Decatur so pleasant and enjoyable. We are grateful for all that you have meant, not only to us, but to all those students who have a greater appreciation of the English language and literature because you made it so interesting. Your leadership in the church and community has touched more lives than you'll ever know.

We treasure your friendship and hope that we'll be able to get together soon to reminisce and catch up on all the news.

With great affection,

Hank and Anne

Hank and Anne

Dear David,

Well, we hear you are finally retiring. What will East Central do without you? You have truly become a legend in your own time and have touched many, if not all, lives in the state of Mississippi through your teaching. My regret is that I never had a class under you and never had a chance to discuss all the many philosophies of literature.

First of all, I must apologize - we have an IBM Computer - word processor downstairs in the office. Everyone in the family uses it except me. The boys - Ross (11) Hal (8) do their homework + reports on it. They are wizards on it. But, as Nona can tell you, I don't adapt to machines very well - and I choose to do all my writing, etc in longhand -

Most of the time - printing - I can do it much faster than typing. I do part time writing - Curricula, grants etc. - individual contracts with the University and when I do, I write it out long hand and give it to the secretary. So I guess I do not fit in to this age of technology - kind of like you with driving; - Did you ever get your drivers license?

We still love this beautiful area of the world - the mountains, dogwoods - a wonderful place to raise a family - museums, culture, educational opportunities. The boys are both in public schools - very good neighborhood schools - good programs for gifted students. They are not much into sports - are big in scouts (we are leaders), biking, hiking, the performing arts, acting. Hal plays piano, Bass, Clarinet.

Dick is an administrator at UTC and teaches 1 Class a

semester. I don't have to work (we are fortunate) so I just do odd jobs as I want - some teaching of classes but it's really not worth it as adjunct faculty. I spend most of my time being a mama + volunteer work. That's a full time job.

Nona + Children visited us in late summer. It was good to see them. We subscribe to MS Magazine and read Harriet's recent article. We have kept up with you and Carol + family through Christmas cards and invitations to the fair from Nona.

My memories of you date back to USM around 1979 - 1982. Nona and I became friends and lived in that 2 story apt. building on Hardy St. (which has been torn down). You visited us several times. You + I would spend many hours discussing and trying to solve the problems of the world. Here it is almost 15 years later, and boy, it would take us forever to solve the problems of the

world today. I would enjoy getting together with you to continue our discussions. Now that you're retired you + Carol ought to head over this way and visit.

We'll be thinking of you May 6th on your retirement day. Pray for us - we will all be riding in a Bike a Thousand miles to raise money for Multiple Sclerosis on May 6.


Tell all hello. I will always remember you as a true southern gentleman (and these are rare now).

Enjoy your retirement -

Gay,

Dick, Ross, Hal

Gruetzmacher


May 11, 1995

Dear Mr. Vickers:

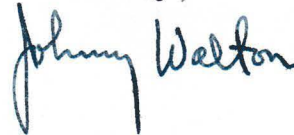
Congratulations on your retirement. It is well deserved, but I know you will be missed at East Central.

I attended East Central in 1959-61 and although I was not in any of your classes, I always had the utmost respect and admiration for you because of all the things you did for all of the students.

This plaque is just a little something to show my appreciation for what you've meant to the college for all these years. I think you will be interested to know that it is made of teak wood that came off the deck of the battleship Wisconsin.

Best wishes for your retirement.

Sincerely,





Barry L. Mellinger, President

Dr. Richard J. Miller, Vice President
Perkinston Campus

P O Box 47 Perkinston, MS 39573
Telephone: 601/928-5211

April 21, 1995

East Central Community College
Decatur,
Mississippi

English Department Faculty:

Congratulations to Mr. Ovid Vickers and to East Central in honoring Mr. Vickers at the convocation ceremony May 6.

We have many fond memories of reading Mr. Vickers' articles and being with him at S.C.E.T.C. conferences.

Sincerely,

Sandra Acres, Chairperson
Language Arts Department

js



STATE BOARD FOR COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES

3825 Ridgewood Road • Jackson, Mississippi 39211 • (601) 982-6518

April 27, 1995

Mr. Ovid Sparks Vickers
East Central Community College
Post Office Box 129
Decatur, MS 39327

Dear Mr. Vickers:

I regret that I will be unable to attend the special dedication ceremony of the Fine Arts Center at East Central. Unfortunately, I have a conflict which cannot be changed.

I am proud of you and your work and all that you have done to enhance the image of East Central and all of Mississippi's community colleges. Your professional reputation and status add greatly to the prestige and respect afforded to Mississippi's community college faculty.

I wish you the best in your future endeavors. I appreciate what East Central has done to recognize your special talents and contribution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Olon E. Ray". The signature is stylized with long, sweeping strokes.

Olon E. Ray, Executive Director
State Board for Community and Junior Colleges

OER/jb

cc: Dr. Eddie Smith, President
East Central Community College

EAST CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

DECATUR, MISSISSIPPI 39327

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

601-635-2111

April 27, 1995

Mr. and Mrs. Arno Vincent
[REDACTED]

Dear Arno and Ruth:

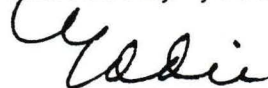
Thank you so much for your recent letter and for the very generous gift of fifty dollars (\$50.00) given in honor of Ovid Vickers. As requested, this contribution will be deposited in the Arno and Ruth Vincent Scholarship Fund.

I regret that you will not be able to attend the Awards Day Program on May 4, 1995. However, we will look forward to seeing you on the following Saturday at the Vickers Convocation.

We are always glad to have you at East Central.

With best personal regards, I am

Sincerely yours,



Eddie M. Smith
President

EMS:las

cc: Mr. Ovid Vickers ✓





Mississippi Delta Community College

Moorhead, Mississippi 38761

Office of the President

May 8, 1995

Mr. Ovid S. Vickers
East Central Community College
Decatur, MS 39327

Dear Mr. Vickers:

I have never had the pleasure of meeting you but please allow me a few minutes of your time. I just finished reading the article on your retirement in the East Central Community College Alumni magazine.

Many of my relatives are from Newton County and my father attended East Central in the late 20's. I have always had an interest in East Central because of family connections. When excellence in teaching is talked about, your name is always one of the first to be mentioned. Dr. Eddie Smith has also talked about your abilities many times in my presence.

Your retirement will not only be felt at East Central but also throughout the community college system as well. Teachers of your stature are why we continue to be successful. Presidents and Deans don't make community colleges what they are, great teachers do.

I wish you well in your retirement. I'm very sorry that I did not have an opportunity to get to know that "Legend from East Central".

Sincerely,

Bobby S. Garvin, Ed.D.
President

swe

May 7, 1995

Dear Ovid and Carol:

A note to say hello and that we have been thinking of you these past weeks. Congratulations once again on your retirement from East Central after 40 years and also for having the Fine Arts center named for you. You are certainly most deserving of the honor. We enjoyed reading all about it in the Warrior alumni magazine. I was in Eastman last week and I also read the article in the Times-Journal. I made copies of the alumni magazine and sent to the lady at the paper.

Jimmy is also retiring at the end of this school year--June 30th, but he after only 32 years. He plans to golf, hunt and fish and probably get a part-time job later on. I plan to stay at my pre-school until I no longer enjoy working with small children or get too old, whichever comes first. We have a lot picked out on the golf course here and plan to sell our house and build as soon as they put the lots on the market. I don't look forward to the hassle of building or moving but we look forward to living there.

We spent spring holidays in April in Washington and Virginia. We had a wonderful trip. Our hotel in Washington was just off Pennsylvania Ave. between the White House and the Capitol so we walked to everything. It took Jimmy two weeks to recover. In Charlottesville, we visited Monticello. Dan Jordan from Philadelphia who graduated from high school with Jimmy is president of the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation. He and Jimmy enjoyed visiting and he was very nice and gave us a VIP tour.

Our children are fine. Debbie has finished all her course work and into her research full time and working on her dissertation. She should be finished in March. Her husband, Chris, is getting settled in his new job in computer software. Jim is working on his Masters and continues to teach. He is engaged and the wedding is tentative^{ly} set for December.

We plan to be in Mississippi for at least two weeks this summer and we'll see you at the fair. I'm saving my quarters for the slot machines at the casino. The first time I went I won \$27.00 but lost \$3.00 on my second visit. I only allow myself \$10.00 to lose. The first time I saw the casino I couldn't believe it. I'm still amazed every time I go out there.

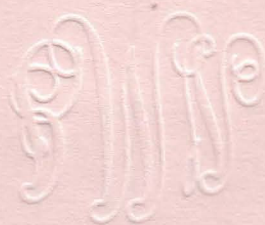
I think it is wonderful that you are doing tours to Europe. What fun that must be. Now that's a job I could love! I hope you have a great trip in July.

I must go, excuse my rusty typing. Have a wonderful summer and we'll see you at the fair.

Sincerely,

Jimmy and Margaret

Heritage
CROWN



yours. Believe it or not I was
listening in class and your
words & thoughts sometimes
revisit me as I observe various
situations in this world. Best of
luck to you always.

Nancy Jo (Buntyn) Maples
Union (ECJC 1982-84)

P.S. Please tell Harriet I am tickled
about her national award & success!

4. 25. 95

Dear Mr. Vickers,

Clarence and I have been thinking back and remembering the time when arno brought a new ECJC teacher from Georgia to Decatur Exchange Club meeting and introducing him to all the members. Clarence has always felt so honored that he was one of the members and one of the first to welcome you to East Central and our community.

We have treasured our friendship with you down through the years and have been so pleased that you have been a teacher and friend to our children and grandchildren.

We rejoice with you in your retirement and wish you the very best in the years ahead.

This brings
sincere best wishes
for retirement dreams-come-true,
And the hope that all
your plans work out
the way you want them to.

With Best Wishes
Clarence and Viola
Blount

And don't forget your
promise to go to SCETC / TYCA
with us in January!

Today is
your special day.
Hope it's especially
happy for you!

Congratulations on both your
"Canonization" and your decision
to take the money and run...
straight to your front porch!

Here's something to keep you
company while you're meditating,
ruminating, cogitating, and
writing that first book -

We love you lots,
Sue and Faye

So glad to hear
the good news . . .
Hope the future
continues to bring
everything you're hoping for.

Best Wishes Always

I'm so glad they are naming
the building for you. You have
been such an asset to
East Central Community College!
So sorry I can't be there -
My thoughts and prayers with
you. Love Anna Bee

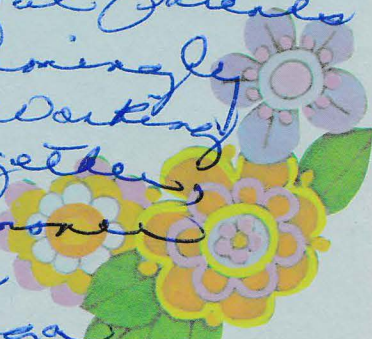
Monday
May 13th



My Dear Dad,

It was so nice to hear
about the honor to be
bestowed on you as the
Saturday - you have well
earned the naming of the
Fine Arts Center in honor
of you. I am sure every
student you ever had
was individually honored
by you & made to feel
your honor & love for
as long as he or she was
in your class & long
afterwards. I would venture
to say you remember each
& every name!

You had wonderful parents
& we were all seemingly
one big family, working
together, eating together,
& when time & summer
weather permitted,
swimming in Sugar
Creek which I felt was
much larger than a little





2.
 "ash tree". Many years
 ago when I saw it
 in it must have been
 of 15 feet wide on level.
 Because, time has changed
 age so much, but my
 mental pictures ~~note~~
 possible to see it as
 used to be.
 I am so glad your Dad (who
 never forget a thing) &
 crossed & passed on his
 knowledge & story telling
 his young son who had
 & improved on his in-
 stance for the benefit of
 us.
 A whole lifetime can
 flash on our "mental screen"
 so quickly! I can now better
 understand Psalm 90, Verse
4: "For a thousand years in
 thy sight are but as
 yesterday when it is
 past, and as a watch
 in the night."

3-

Oh, I am sending a
picture of a land home
young man you might
identify + remember the
date it was made - sometime
in the 40's or early 50's. I
wish I knew! Also, one of
Lillian Jones under the
Baker'sville sign, you
know + the house that has
burned where I was born.
I wish we could have made
more pictures but both
cameras + developing called
for money which was very
scarce, as you kindly recall.
One great thing I am thankful
for, we were all so happy
+ appreciative for the simple
things.

Well, my writing is so
poor + my typewriter is
quite slow so I am
going to close with a
reminder that a great
band of witnesses will be
there May 6th Lots of love, Anne

* Hebrews 12:1

Dear Duid,

We are so pleased and happy that you have been recognized in such an outstanding way on your retirement as to have the David Vickers Fine Arts Center dedicated in your honor. It certainly speaks of the respect the Board of Trustees, Administration and Colleagues feel for you.

We enjoyed having you speak at the DAR and the Chamber of Commerce banquet. Many people have said that you gave the most interesting and humorous speeches that we have had. Do continue making such delightful after dinner speeches. We all need to relax and have some good laughs.

We wish for you and Carol a happy retirement time and many "fun" travels. Please

We are blessed
by being your
friends.
Thanks for being a
good friend to Clay.
We love you all.



5

Gideon Recognition

Bibles *have been donated*

IN HONOR OF YOUR

Many Years in Education

These Bibles were provided by

NAME

[Redacted], Betty & Clay Ward

ADDRESS

CITY/STATE

[Redacted]

June 30, 1995

Dear Ovid,

Occasionally people do the right thing and I think that is what happened when ECCC named its fine arts center for you.

Congratulations! It is an honor totally deserved and could not have been dedicated to a better person.

My very best to you and Carol.

Sincerely,

Emily Boswell



to the past
all the things
that you have done
Must make this special time in life
a very happy one -
And looking to the future
must be wonderful for you...
Now you'll have time
to do the things
you've always wanted to!

Congratulations

Thank for having touched
our family in your many
special ways! Love,
Janell & Kenneth

May 2, 1995

Dear Mr. Vickers:

Today I learned of your retirement from ECC through the most enjoyable article in the Alumni Magazine.

Best wishes and congratulations!

When you and Carol are filling up your busy schedule, I hope you'll save some time to visit us at CPRAM and the Junior/Community College Press Association.

Donna Thomas

May 9, 1995

Dear Dr. Vickers,

I want to congratulate you upon your forthcoming retirement from East Central.

Some twenty-two or twenty-three years ago, I was a student in your English Literature class. You helped to instill in me a love for literature and a strong desire to learn.

Each year I speak about you to my sixth grade students.

Best of wishes.

Sincerely,
Dianne Crapps

Dear Ovid,

It was with pleasure that Chester and I read about the honors bestowed on you by the college. It is refreshing for some one who deserves credit to be recognized and given credit. Congratulations on your successes!

When your retirement begins we are hoping that you and Carol will come to Eastman more often. We would love having you for dinner and we are behind with our conversation.

Your friends,
Martha & Chester Saunders

May 2, 1995

Ovid —

We wanted to say
congratulations on your
retirement.

Hope you have a
fun filled future!

Sincerely,
Humanities
Division



The Place to Be.

*You are invited to
attend a Convocation
honoring
Ovid Sparks Vickers
upon the naming of the
Fine Arts Center
in his honor.*

*Saturday, May 6, 1995
East Central Community College
Huff Auditorium
Two-thirty o'clock in the afternoon*

** * * * **

*Reception immediately following
in the Mabry Memorial Cafeteria*

*Nona, Harriet, and Ovid III
cordially invite you to a
Dinner Buffet
in honor of the retirement of their father
Ovid S. Vickers
Saturday, May 6, 1995 at 5:30 p.m.
home of
Carol and Ovid Vickers*

Regrets only:

UPCOMING EVENTS...

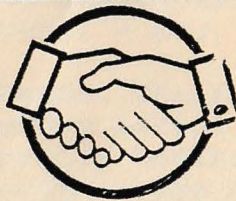
This Sunday, May 14th is Mother's Day. All mothers present will be honored.

Confirmation Class with Mentors will meet this Sunday, May 14th at 5:00 p.m.

The Sunday Evening Circle of UMW will meet this Sunday at 6:00 p.m. in the Chapel. They will continue their study on "Welcome the Child" Everyone is invited.

Sunday, May 21st we will recognize all graduates from our church family.

The Senior Citizens Luncheon sponsored by the New Beginnings Sunday School Class will be Sunday, May 21st after church in the Fellowship Hall.



VISITING WITH US SUNDAY-
Henry, Darlene and Donna
Reynolds, Mary Munn Wall

Love bears all things

I sat once with an old Irish priest in his house. His faithful Irish setter was next to him, resting his head in the priest's lap. "Don't tell the bishop," said the priest, his eye twinkling. "But I expect I'll see old Red up there in heaven - if I get there. As a matter of fact, I wouldn't be surprised to find more dogs than people in heaven. We Christians prate about forgiveness, and loyalty and love, while the dogs practice all of these qualities."

-George Plagenz

AROUND THE CHURCH...

*Thank
you!*

Dear Church Family:

We thank everyone who came to the shower last Sunday for John Wesley, and for the lovely gifts. We appreciate Debbie Boggan and both circles of the UMW for planning and organizing this special event. Everything was so nice.

Love,
Rick, Lynn,
Catherine, and
John Wesley



Mr. Ovid Vickers, a member of our fellowship, was honored last Saturday (May 7) at East Central Community College for his years of service as teacher, leader, and friend. During a special convocation in Huff Auditorium colleagues and a former student shared stories and memories from their association with Mr. Vickers. Then the gathering processed outside for the unveiling of the sign for the "Ovid Vickers Fine Arts Building". It was a remarkable day for a remarkable man, and a good time was had by all who attended.

EAST CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

DECATUR, MISSISSIPPI 39327

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

601-635-2111

TO: All ECCC Administration, Faculty, and Professional Staff
FROM: Dr. Eddie M. Smith, President *EMS*

DATE: May 2, 1995

RE: Procedures for the Ovid S. Vickers Convocation

1. Personnel should assemble by 2:00 p.m. and line up according to the order listed on the following page. The line should begin in the hall in front of student services and continue through the underpass into Newton Hall. Room 60 of Newton Hall will be available for those needing a place to put on their gowns*.
2. At the proper time the line will march single file down the west aisle of Huff Auditorium and with the aid of Warrior Corps members, the faculty will locate their seats in the center section. Faculty should remain standing until all members have reached their seats and then on command from the Warrior Corps members be seated together.
3. After the program, personnel will wait for the dignitaries on the stage and then, remaining in order, march out of the east aisle to the Ovid S. Vickers Fine Arts Center. They will form lines corresponding to the seating arrangement in back of the sign to be dedicated.

*Caps and gowns are available in the office of the Dean of Instruction. Please come by prior to Friday afternoon, May 5, 1995, to pick up your regalia. Also, keep your cap and gown until graduation on the 12th and return them after the ceremony as usual.



Processional and Recessional Order for the
Ovid S. Vickers Dedication Ceremony

PLEASE LINE UP IN THE FOLLOWING ORDER STARTING IN FRONT OF STUDENT SERVICES AND CONTINUING THROUGH THE UNDERPASS INTO NEWTON HALL.

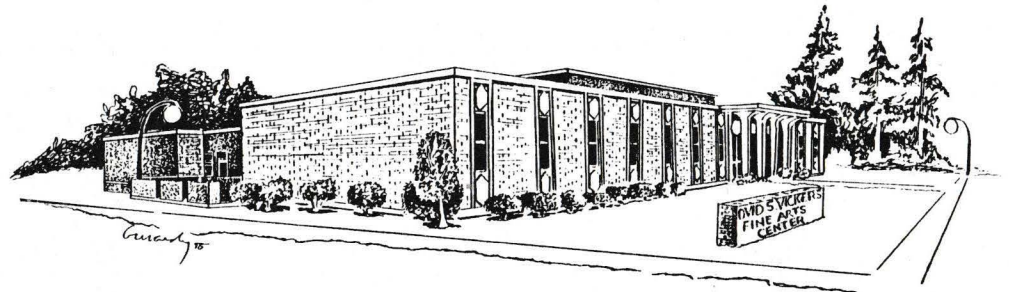
YEAR	NAME	YEAR	NAME
	Mr. Ovid S. Vickers	1990	James Bayne
	Dr. Eddie M. Smith	1990	Jimmy Dempsey
	Dr. Phil Sutphin	1990	Conrad Germany
	Mr. V. C. Manning	1990	Laurie Glaze
	Dr. Thomas Richardson	1990	Judy Harrison
	Dr. Richard Ethridge	1991	Roger Burkes
	Reverend Rick Brooks	1991	Marty Cooper
1956	Lucille Wood	1991	Thomas Key
1962	Thomas Thrash	1991	Virginia Pace
1963	Joe Clark	1991	Tammy Parks
1963	Shelby Harris	1991	Laura Thorne
1968	Alford Deaton	1991	Sandra Wedgeworth
1968	Raymond McMullan	1992	Mike Dearing
1969	Ann Burkes	1992	Kelvin Lyon
1969	Chester Clark	1992	Shelia Lyon
1969	Richard Clark	1992	Tommy Spillman
1969	Alice Pouncey	1992	Mickey Vance
1970	Lois McMullan	1992	Juanita West
1971	Al Bailey	1993	Jim Blackburn
1972	Sara Griffin	1993	Troy Brown
1974	John Adcock	1993	Mary Everett
1975	Mike Anderson	1993	Nancy Harris
1975	Larry Blackburn	1993	Frankie Harrison
1975	Bruce Guraedy	1993	Janice Jacobs
1975	Elizabeth Pitts	1993	Scott McLemore
1975	Gail Wood	1993	Billy Lovett
1977	Richard Fisher	1993	Nancy Melton
1978	Gloria Johnson	1993	William R. Mott
1979	James Hansford	1993	Preston Holman
1981	Roberta Holt	1993	Chris Stokes
1982	Brenda Carson	1993	Johnnie Netherland
1982	Tom Carson	1993	Maudean Sanders
1983	Ricky Harrison	1993	Sandra Thomas
1983	Charles Hinson	1993	Marian Thornton
1983	Brenda Johnson	1993	Mary Wright
1984	Sarah Griffin	1994	Linda Baucum
1984	Lester Miles	1994	Patti Davis
1985	Genie Davis	1994	Cynthia Gaudin
1985	Samuel Pace	1994	Tonya Gager
1986	Katherine George	1994	Jane Hurst
1986	Robert Pearson	1994	Brenda Kirby
1986	Brenda Pierce	1994	Randall Lee
1987	Jamie Clark	1994	Patricia Long
1987	Ronald Davis	1994	Earl Marshall
1987	Bubby Johnston	1994	Gloria McRae
1987	Polly Mayes	1994	Robert Murphy
1988	Melvie C. Culberson	1994	William Norcross
1988	Michele Ergle	1994	Joseph Renaud
1989	Leonard Barrier	1994	Stacey Weir
1989	Ann Bullock	1994	Ronnie Westbrook
1989	L.B. Bullock	1994	Roger Whitlock
1989	Thomas Fortenberry	1995	Monelle Clifton
1989	Fredrick Lyons	1995	Willie Coats

PROGRAM

Prelude	ECCC Brass Ensemble
Processional	Prelude to Die Meistersinger Wagner
Welcome to Guests	President Eddie M. Smith
Invocation	The Reverend Rick Brooks
Introduction of Speakers	President Eddie M. Smith
Speaking to honor Mr. Vickers:	
Opening Commendations	Mr. V. C. Manning Chairman, Board of Trustees
Additional Commendations	Dr. Richard C. Ethridge
Additional Commendations	Dr. Thomas Richardson English Department University of Southern Mississippi
Additional Commendations	Dean Phil A. Sutphin
Concluding Commendations	President Eddie M. Smith
Response	Mr. Ovid S. Vickers
Benediction	Dr. Richard C. Ethridge
Recessional	Prelude to Act Three Lohengrin by Wagner

A formal dedication ceremony will be held immediately following the recessional in front of the building to be dedicated. A reception will follow the ceremony in Mabry Memorial Cafeteria.

CONVOCATION
to
Honor
Mr. Ovid S. Vickers
in the Naming of the
OVID S. VICKERS
Fine Arts Center



Saturday, May 6, 1995
2:30 P.M.

REMARKS ON THE OCCASION OF THE DEDICATION
OF THE
OVID S. VICKERS FINE ARTS CENTER

INTRODUCTION: (1) A verse from Horace, III, xxix characterizes our honored colleague as well as any I know.

Happy the man, and happy he alone,
He who can call today his own:
He who, secure within, can say,
Tomorrow do thy worst, for I have lived today.

(2) I've always considered Mr. Ovid S. Vickers to be a happy, secure, and gregarious person who makes the most of each day and worries less than others about his own past or future. (3) He appears to attempt to wring everything possible out of what is happening now, and he has done well doing it. (4) Attempting to improve my own wearisome life somewhat, I have studied his approach to life during the thirty-four years I've known him. (5) This is what I've learned about him.

I. HE ACCEPTS ALL PEOPLE FOR WHAT THEY ARE, WHERE THEY ARE, AND HOW THEY ARE

- A. Vickers is drawn to people who are to the left or to the right of the center--or common ground--and develops rapport with such with intensity proportionate to the distance separating them from center.
- B. He is gifted in making the most eccentric or staid person feel that he/she is special (or normal) and that he/she belongs.
- C. Overriding this ability, he has the gift to make the most mediocre and common/normal person feel that he/she is not common or in the center but is actually out there somewhere occupying special space as a unique, extraordinary individual.

II. HE CHARMS FOLKS AND THEY ACCEPT HIM FOR WHAT HE IS

- A. Vickers is a concerned, caring, responsive individual at heart.
- B. He is a teacher, advisor, father confessor, director, and catalyst who offers a lot to those who blend into the circle of his influence.
- C. He promotes harmony, celebrates achievement, and pushes improvement. To move into his circle of influence is to be challenged.

III. HE LEAVES PEOPLE FEELING BETTER ABOUT THEMSELVES, ABOUT HIM, AND THE WHOLE SCHEME OF THINGS

- A. Ergo, there is a better place in the world made up of better folks with clearer goals and more definite orientation toward success.
- B. Hence, when the present, which is always good with folks like Vickers around, becomes history, it is better history. When the future becomes the present, folks are better able to cope with it.
- C. One thing I personally relished about him the past several years is that he has proudly claimed and executed the position of "senior" faculty member at ECCC. Ms. Lucille Wood will soon bear that appellation and will do an equally great job for which I am very grateful. But, the thing that troubles me about Ovid Vickers' retiring is that I now am the "senior male faculty member." And I'm afraid that I'll need a lot of help to accept that as any great honor.

Richard E. Etheridge

PRESIDENT SMITH, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN!

IT IS INDEED A PRIVILEGE FOR ME TO BE A PART OF THIS CEREMONY TODAY BECAUSE IT HONORS A PERSON WHO HAS MADE SUCH A TREMENDOUS CONTRIBUTION TO EAST CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE OVER THE PAST FORTY YEARS.

MR. OVID S. VICKERS, CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMUNICATIONS AND FINE ARTS DIVISION AT THIS INSTITUTION, EARNED THE BA, MA, AND ED.S. DEGREES FROM GEORGE PEABODY COLLEGE IN THE FIELD OF ENGLISH. AFTER TEACHING ONE YEAR ON THE HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL IN GEORGIA AND SERVING TWO YEARS IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY, HE HAS EFFECTIVELY USED HIS CREDENTIALS TO TEACH AND MOLD THE LIVES OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE STUDIED SPEECH, DRAMA, COMPOSITION, AND LITERATURE OVER HIS FOUR-DECADE CAREER AT THIS INSTITUTION. BESIDES HIS TRADITIONAL CLASSES, HE HAS TAUGHT HONORS COURSES, CHAIRED THE HONORS PROGRAM, AND LED IN ESTABLISHING AND TEACHING LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT CLASSES. HE WAS CERTIFIED FOR THE LATTER RESPONSIBILITY UNDER A GRANT FROM THE W.W. KELLOGG FOUNDATION THROUGH THE SPONSORSHIP OF PHI THETA KAPPA.

MR. VICKER'S PASSION HAS ALWAYS BEEN EDUCATING STUDENTS AND HE HAS EARNED THE REPUTATION THAT HE ACCEPTS NOTHING LESS THAN THEIR BEST WORK AND EFFORT. HE IS A MASTER TEACHER, IS VERY KNOWLEDGEABLE, AND HAS THE ABILITY TO INJECT JUST THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF HUMOR INTO WHAT HE DOES. THIS COMBINATION HELPS TO ACCOUNT FOR HIS EXTRAORDINARY POPULARITY AND SUCCESS WITH HIS STUDENTS. HE HAS CONSISTENTLY PUT THEM FIRST AND FOREMOST IN HIS CAREER. FOR HIM, NOTHING MEASURES UP TO THEIR LEARNING AND BEING SUCCESSFUL IN THE MARKETPLACE. CONSEQUENTLY, HE HAS TAUGHT FOUNDATION COURSES TO MANY SCHOLARS WHO NOW FILL IMPORTANT POSITIONS IN COLLEGES, UNIVERSITIES, AND THE BUSINESS WORLD.

OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM MR. VICKERS HAS BEEN AN EQUALLY ESTEEMED AND PRODUCTIVE INDIVIDUAL. HE HAS SERVED AS PRESIDENT OF THE MISSISSIPPI COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH AND WAS CHOSEN AS COLLEGE ENGLISH TEACHER OF THE YEAR IN 1990. HE HAS BEEN SELECTED AS INSTRUCTOR OF THE YEAR BY THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF EAST CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND HAS BEEN HONORED AS AN OUTSTANDING TEACHER BY THE MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE. HE IS A PROLIFIC WRITER AND HAS BEEN PUBLISHED IN SUCH

PERIODICALS AS SOUTHERN LIVING, THE GEORGIA MAGAZINE, THE TEXAS REVIEW, PROGRESSIVE FARMER, DELTA SCENE, THE MISSISSIPPI MAGAZINE, AND THE JOURNAL OF AMERICAN FOLKLORE. HE WAS A NEWSPAPER COLUMNIST FOR SEVERAL YEARS AS WELL, WRITING FOR THE UNION APPEAL OF MISSISSIPPI AND TIMES JOURNAL OF GEORGIA.

IN ADDITION TO HIS SUCCESS IN ACADEMIC CIRCLES AND AS A WRITER, MR. VICKERS IS VERY BUSY ON THE SPEECH CIRCUIT. THOSE OF US WHO HAVE HEARD HIM SPEAK TO CIVIC CLUBS AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS KNOW THAT HE IS A COMBINATION OF MARK TWAIN AND WILL ROGERS IN THE WAY HE WEAVES A TALE AND IS A TRUE SOUTHERN GENTLEMAN AFTER THE FASHION OF ROBERT E. LEE.

IT IS FOR THESE AND MANY OTHER REASONS, THAT I THANK YOU, MR. VICKERS, ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF EAST CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE. IT IS FOR THESE AND MANY OTHER REASONS THAT WE ARE HAPPY TO BE A PART OF THIS OCCASION HONORING YOU TODAY. WE WISH YOU WELL, AND DO NOT WANT YOU TO CUT YOUR TIES WITH THIS INSTITUTION BECAUSE YOU ARE AS MUCH A PART OF IT AS IT IS OF YOU!

OVID S. VICKERS CONVOCATION

MAY 6, 1995

NOTES

- GOOD AFTERNOON LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.
- IT IS MY DISTINCT AND SPECIAL PRIVILEGE TO WELCOME ALL OF YOU TO THIS VERY SPECIAL AND HISTORICAL OCCASION.
- EACH OF YOU, INDEED IS A SPECIAL GUEST WITH A SPECIAL PURPOSE FOR BEING HERE THIS AFTERNOON.
- WE'RE GLAD YOU ARE ALL WITH US.
- PERHAPS THE HIGHEST HONOR THAT A PERSON CAN RECEIVE FROM THE COLLEGE AT WHICH HE^{she} TEACHES OR ADMINISTERS IS TO HAVE A MAJOR FACILITY NAMED IN HIS^{her} HONOR.
- SUCH HONORS ARE BESTOWED VERY SPARINGLY.
- DURING MY TEN (10) YEAR TENURE AT THIS INSTITUTION, ONLY TWO (2) BUILDINGS HAVE BEEN PREVIOUSLY NAMED FOR OUTSTANDING PEOPLE ASSOCIATED WITH EAST CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE.
- THE BRACKEEN-WOOD PHYSICAL EDUCATION BUILDING NAMED FOR GENERAL DENVER BRACKEEN AND MISS LUCILLE WOOD, AND
- THE BRADFORD J. TUCKER APPLIED TECHNOLOGY CENTER NAMED FOR DR. BRAD TUCKER, FORMER DEAN OF INSTRUCTION.
- TODAY, WE ADD AN ADDITIONAL HONOREE TO THIS LIST OF SIGNIFICANT HONORS AS WE COMMEMORATE THE NAMING OF THE OVID S. VICKERS FINE ARTS CENTER.
- AT THIS TIME, I WOULD LIKE TO ASK OUR SPECIAL HONOREE, MR. OVID S. VICKERS TO STAND AND BE RECOGNIZED.
- SPECIFIC COMMENDATIONS WILL BE PAID HIM IN A FEW MOMENTS.

- APPLAUSE

- AS WE INDICATED, ALL OF YOU ARE OUR SPECIAL GUESTS.

- WE WOULD, AT THIS TIME, LIKE TO ASK THAT SEVERAL GROUPS OF GUESTS STAND AND BE RECOGNIZED.

- FIRST, I WOULD LIKE TO ASK THE VICKERS FAMILY TO STAND AS THEY ARE INTRODUCED.

- PLEASE REMAIN STANDING UNTIL ALL OF THE FAMILY MEMBERS ARE RECOGNIZED.

- CAROL, OVID'S WIFE, WHO HERSELF IS A MOST VALUABLE MEMBER OF THE EAST CENTRAL FAMILY

- DAUGHTER, NONA CREEL - ATLANTA

- DAUGHTER, HARRIET - RAYMOND

- SON, OVID III - HATTIESBURG

- GRANDDAUGHTER - CAROL CREEL - *ATLANTA*

- SISTER, PAULINE WYNN - LA GRANGE, GEORGIA

- MOTHER-IN-LAW - MRS. ELSIE FARISH - *STALO*

- OTHERS, MEMBERS OF THE VICKERS FAMILY.

- APPLAUSE

- THEN WE HAVE QUITE A LIST OF OTHER GUESTS WHOM WE WOULD LIKE TO RECOGNIZE AND TO ASK TO STAND BY GROUPS.

- PLEASE STAND AND REMAIN STANDING UNTIL ALL GROUPS ARE RECOGNIZED.

- MEMBERS OF THE EAST CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
- FORMER MEMBERS OF THE COLLEGE'S BOARD OF TRUSTEES
- MEMBERS OF THE DISTRICT BOARDS OF SUPERVISORS
- FORMER PRESIDENTS OF EAST CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE
- ^{Former} RETIRED FACULTY MEMBERS, ADM. & STAFF
- COUNTY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
- MEMBERS OF THE EAST CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE ALUMNI BOARD OF DIRECTORS
- MAYORS OF DISTRICT TOWNS
- DISTRICT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS AND PRESIDENTS
- LEADERSHIP NEWTON COUNTY CLASS MEMBERS
- APPLAUSE
- NEXT GROUP:
- STATE BOARD FOR COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGE BOARD MEMBERS
- THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND PROFESSIONAL STAFF OF THE STATE BOARD FOR COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES
- DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS AND PRINCIPALS
- DISTRICT WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEMBERS, ^{ppp}
- VO-TECH ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS

- APPLAUSE
- NEXT GROUP:
- U.S. SENATORS AND CONGRESSMEN OR THEIR REPRESENTATIVES
- STATE LEGISLATORS
- STATE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
- COMMUNITY/JUNIOR COLLEGE PRESIDENTS
- UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS AND THE COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION
- APPLAUSE
- FINALLY, I WOULD LIKE TO INTRODUCE A GROUP TO WHOM WE EXTEND A VERY, VERY WARM AND SPECIAL WELCOME.
- IF YOU WERE EVER TAUGHT IN THE CLASSROOM AT EAST CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE BY MR. OVID VICKERS, WOULD YOU PLEASE STAND.
- ~~STAND~~
- APPLAUSE
- Now - IF YOU WERE A STUDENT OF OVID VICKERS IN 1955-56 - PLEASE STAND*
- ~~APPLAUSE~~
- CERTAINLY, AGAIN, WE WELCOME YOU ALL.
- AT THIS TIME, WE WOULD LIKE TO CALL UPON THE REVEREND RICK BROOKS, PASTOR OF MR. VICKERS' CHURCH, THE DECATUR UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, TO LEAD THE INVOCATION.
- REV. BROOKS
- IN ADDITION TO THE COMMENTS THAT I WILL MAKE IN CONCLUSION, WE HAVE FOUR INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL SPEAK IN HONOR OF MR. OVID S. VICKERS.

- THE FIRST, MR. V. C. MANNING, ^{Wicks} VERY EFFECTIVELY SERVES AS CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF EAST CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE.
- MR. MANNING IS FROM NESHOPA COUNTY AND ALSO SERVES AS THE SUPERINTENDENT OF THE NESHOPA COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM.
- FOLLOWING HIM WILL BE A LONG-TIME COLLEAGUE OF OVID VICKERS AND THE PERSON WHO VERY CAPABLY CHAIRED THE COMMITTEE THAT MADE ALL OF THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR TODAY'S EVENTS, DR. RICHARD C. ETHRIDGE.
- DR. ETHRIDGE HAS BEEN ON THE FACULTY OF EAST CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE SINCE 1961.
- FOLLOWING DR. ETHRIDGE WILL BE DR. THOMAS RICHARDSON A MEMBER OF THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI.
- DR. RICHARDSON WAS ONE OF OVID VICKERS STUDENTS A FEW YEARS AGO.
- THEN DR. PHIL A. SUTPHIN, WHO IS DEAN OF INSTRUCTION AT THE COLLEGE, WILL DELIVER ADDITIONAL COMMENDATIONS.
- WE WILL ASK FOR EACH TO COME TO THE PODIUM IN THE ORDER PRESENTED.

CONCLUDING COMMENDATIONS

- SO MANY APPROPRIATE COMMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE ABOUT MR. VICKERS BY THOSE WHO HAVE PRECEDED ME.
- ALL HAVE ATTEMPTED TO CHARACTERIZE HIM AND TO COMMEND HIM FROM THEIR VARIOUS PERSPECTIVES.
- OVID VICKERS IS NOT AN EASY PERSON TO DESCRIBE OR CHARACTERIZE.
- HOWEVER, THESE ARE SOME OF MY OBSERVATIONS:

- HE IS A CHARACTER IN EVERY POSITIVE SENSE OF THE WORD.
- HE HAS BECOME A LEGEND AT EAST CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE.
- HE IS UNIQUELY TALENTED.
- *HE IS A SCHOLAR.*
- HIS SENSE OF HUMOR IS PRICELESS AND ENVIED BY ALL WHO EXPERIENCE IT.
- HE IS HIMSELF - AND THAT SUITS HIM AND OTHERS VERY, VERY WELL.
- HE'S MORAL, HE'S DECENT, AND HE'S GOOD.
- HE'S A TEACHER AND TEACHING SCHOOL IS WHAT HIS LIFE IS ALL ABOUT.
- THESE ARE SOME THINGS ABOUT OVID VICKERS, YET, AGAIN, THEY'RE NOT ADEQUATE TO PAINT THE PORTRAIT OF THE MAN.
- I AM REMINDED OF THE SONG FROM THE ALL-TIME FAVORITE MUSICAL BY ROGERS AND HAMMERSTEIN, THE SOUND OF MUSIC, WHEN THE NUNS OF THE ABBEY ATTEMPTED TO CHARACTERIZE THE EXCEPTIONAL AND UNDEFINABLE MARIA.
- THEY USED A WHOLE ARRAY OF DESCRIPTIVES YET CAME BACK TO THE QUESTION, "HOW DO YOU FIND A WORD THAT MEANS MARIA?"
- AND THEIR ANSWER TO THEMSELVES WAS IN ITSELF ANOTHER ILLUSIVE QUESTION: "HOW DO YOU HOLD A MOONBEAM IN YOUR HAND?"
- FOR 40 WONDERFULLY, WONDERFULLY EXCITING AND PRODUCTIVE YEARS, EAST CENTRAL JUNIOR COLLEGE/EAST CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE HAS HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO HOLD THAT "MOONBEAM IN OUR HANDS."
- LADIES AND GENTLEMEN LET US RECOGNIZE OUR DISTINGUISHED HONOREE, OVID SPARKS VICKERS.

(STANDING OVATION)

RESPONSE - MR. OVID S. VICKERS

- APPLAUSE/STANDING OVATION.
- THANK YOU, THANK YOU MR. VICKERS.
- FOLLOWING THE BENEDICTION TO BE GIVEN BY DR. RICHARD C. ETHRIDGE, WHO ALSO SERVES AS INTERIM PASTOR OF THE CLARKE-VENABLE BAPTIST CHURCH IN DECATUR, PLEASE FOLLOW THE RECESSIONAL TO THE FRONT OF THE OVID S. VICKERS FINE ARTS CENTER FOR THE FORMAL DEDICATION.
- THEN, A RECEPTION WILL BE HELD IN THE MAIN DINING ROOM OF THE MABRY MEMORIAL CAFETERIA FOR ALL OF OUR GUESTS. *ENTER THROUGH THE GOLDEN ROOM.*
- THE OVID S. VICKERS FINE ARTS CENTER WILL BE OPEN DURING THE AFTERNOON FOR THOSE WHO WOULD LIKE TO TOUR THE FACILITY.
- DR. ETHRIDGE

DEDICATION:

BY THE AUTHORITY VESTED IN ME BY THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI AND BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF EAST CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE IT IS MY DISTINCT PRIVILEGE AND HONOR TO PERMANENTLY PROCLAIM THE NAME OF THIS BUILDING, THE OVID S. VICKERS FINE ARTS CENTER.

ECCC to Name Fine Art Center in Honor of Long-time Instructor

Ceremonies to name the East Central Community College Fine Arts Center in honor of a retiring faculty member whose service to the institution spans four decades will be held Saturday, May 6, 1995 on the Decatur campus.

Program activities begin at 2:30 p.m. in Huff Auditorium followed by formal dedication of the Ovid S. Vickers Fine Arts Center scheduled outside the facility. A reception follows in Mabry Memorial Cafeteria. The public is invited to attend.

College President Dr. Eddie M. Smith earlier announced the decision to name the Fine Arts Center in Vickers' honor following unanimous approval of the college's Board of Trustees at its March meeting. The

Board's action came following a recommendation from the College's Committee to study and recommend names for campus buildings and facilities.

In making the announcement, Dr. Smith, committee chairman and a former student of Mr. Vickers, commented:

"It is obviously most appropriate that the College's Fine Arts Center be named in honor of Mr. Ovid Vickers. No one more represents 'fine arts' at East Central than Mr. Vickers. He has not only been an excellent teacher but also an accomplished writer and speaker who has provided a multitude of services in these areas for East Central Community College. There will never be

another 'Ovid Vickers' on this campus; and the naming of the Fine Arts Center for his many contributions will serve as an everlasting tribute to this outstanding individual."

Dr. Richard Ethridge, social sciences instructor and Chairman of the Division of Social Science, Business Administration and Education who chaired a Special Projects Committee which worked on details regarding the recommendation, made the following remarks:

"Mr. Vickers has effectively helped thousands of students who have studied speech, drama, composition and literature with him over his 40 year career at this institution. His passion is educating students and he accepts nothing less than their

best work in these areas. Mr. Vickers puts students first and foremost in his career; nothing equates with their learning and being successful in the

marketplace from his perspective. He has taught foundation courses in his areas of expertise to many scholars who now fill important positions in colleges, universities and the business world."

Dr. Smith added: "Mr. Vickers has served as the 'voice' of East Central Community College for many years. Most any event that requires an emcee or a speaker requires Ovid Vickers: the beauty pageants, the homecoming presentations, the halftime shows, the luncheons, the banquets and the various community, district and state events.

As I heard one person state, 'Mr. Vickers has the rare capability of perceiving beauty, enjoyment and significance in even the most mundane situations. However, his real talent is that he is uniquely able to describe his perception in such a manner that those who hear him can perceive that same meaning, beauty, enjoyment and significance.'"

Vickers, who began his association with East Central in 1955, said he considers the naming of the Fine Arts Center in his honor "to be the greatest honor that has ever come my way during my 65 years."

-The Newton Record, April 5, 1995

A native of Gadsden, Alabama, Vickers has served as Chairman of the Division of Communications and Fine Arts since 1984 in addition to his teaching duties. As an instructor of English, Vickers has been the recipient of various accolades throughout his career.

As the senior faculty person at East Central, Vickers has carried the college mace at the head of all academic professions since the inauguration of President Eddie M. Smith in 1985. At the 1995 graduation exercises on May 12, Vickers will pass the mace to colleague Lucille Wood who will continue the tradition.

Although born in Alabama, Vickers grew up in Dodge County, Georgia and graduated from Chauncey High School. He attended George Peabody College in Nashville, Tennessee, where he received a bachelor's degree in English and social science, a master's degree in English and the Ed. S. degree in English and education.

He is married to the former Carol Farish, an East Central graduate from Neshoba County. She is also a longtime employee of the college, having served as an English instructor, yearbook sponsor and secretary to three former ECCC presidents. Although retired, she still serves as a member of the college's Adjunct faculty as an ABE/GED instructor.

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MONDAY, APRIL 17, 1995

THE CLARION-LEDGER ■ JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI



**DANNY
McKENZIE**

Columnist
The Clarion-Ledger

It's no shock that some things are unlikely to happen

Observations, opinions and other stuff

... Now, there's a surprise: The Canadian Football League isn't coming to Jackson. Probably.

All those who thought the CFL would be here this summer, please raise your hands. That's what I thought.

And I was all ready to win the name-that-team contest sponsored by *Oxford Town*, my favorite newspaper in that north Mississippi town.

The early leader was the "Kudzu Kings" or something close, but my pick was a sure winner.

We would have called the CFL team the "Immigrants" when it came to Jackson, and the "Emigrants" two years later, when it left because of a lack of support. Oh, well. . . .

So the state Supreme Court has said the proposed \$170 million Pine Hills gambling project on an inland waterway in Harrison County won't happen. Probably just as well, though it would have been nice to have another good golf course in the state.

But how much longer will it be before some corporation bigger than the Gold Strike and Lucky Star casino companies decides to pursue this issue — casinos allowed only on the Mississippi River or the Gulf Coast — all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court?

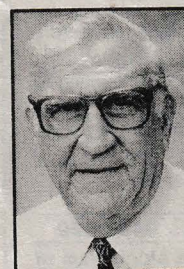
Never mind that the manmade canals where these boats want to moor are already stretching the limits of the current law, why shouldn't Simpson County, if it wanted a casino, be allowed to have one? Or Chickasaw County? Or Lawrence County?

What does having a whole lot of water close by have to do with anything? . . .

Fitting tribute

If ever there was a more appropriate honor than East Central Community College naming its fine arts center for Ovid Vickers, it doesn't come to mind.

Vickers is retiring after 40 years on the East Central campus in Decatur where he has taught English, speech and drama. He is also an accomplished poet and dramatist, and one of Mississippi's leading folklore experts.



Vickers

The dedication of the Vickers Fine Arts Center is scheduled for May 6. . . .

Speaking of Oxford, the Tribute To Elvis, scheduled for Aug. 6-11, is billed as "a serious salute to the king of rock 'n' roll." Well, good. Heaven forbid if this were a frivolous tribute to the Tupelo native.

"We have to wade through a lot of stupid jelly doughnut jokes to get to higher ground," said Jack Soden, head of Memphis-based Elvis Presley Enterprises.

We need to think about that for a while. Elvis on a higher ground? . . .

Style over substance

Here's what's wrong with politics:

Trent Lott, our slick U.S. senator, was explaining why he probably wouldn't be Phil Gramm's vice presidential running mate if the Texas senator wins the Republican presidential nomination.

"Phil and I are from the same region," Lott said last week. "We talk alike and we're philosophically close, so I don't think I'd be a good choice on his ticket."

Never mind that they might make a good governmental team (though that is stretching the imagination a bit), it's not appealing to the voters so it won't happen.

Once again, style triumphs over substance . . . though in this case it's probably a moot point. . . .

John Egerton recently won the prestigious Robert Kennedy Book Award for *Speak Now Against the Day: The Generation Before the Civil Rights Movement in the South*.

Egerton's massive book is one of the most definitive works ever published on the civil rights movement. The best part is that it doesn't read like a history textbook, because of Egerton's smooth writing style.

■
Danny McKenzie's column appears Sunday, Monday, Wednesday and Friday. To contact him, call 961-7065.

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A native of Gadsden, Alabama, Vickers has served as Chairman of the Division of Communications and Fine Arts since 1984 in addition to his teaching duties. As an instructor of English, Vickers has been the recipient of various accolades throughout his career.

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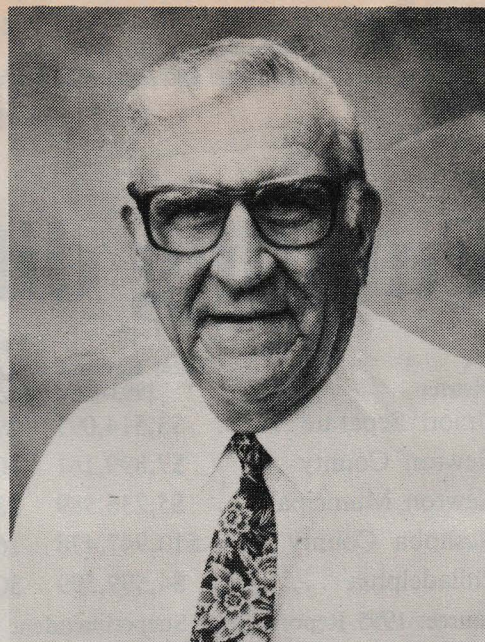
their innovative presentation of subject matter in their respective fields.

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The Mississippi Council of Teachers of English elected Vickers College English Teacher of the Year for 1989-90. He served the organization as president in 1970 and in 1979. In 1993, the Council recognized him with an award for his contributions to literature as a writer, speaker and teacher.

Vickers and colleague Dr. Ethridge inaugurated the Honors Program in English and History at East Central to offer advanced instruction to exceptionally bright students. He and Dr. Ethridge, after extensive preparation at the Phi Theta Kappa Leadership Institute in Virginia, began the PTK Leadership Program to offer leadership instruction to citizens of the community as well as to students of the college.

His writings have also brought recognition to the published poet, playwright and newspaper columnist.



Ovid Vickers

When the University Press of Mississippi recently published a four-volume anthology of Mississippi writers, three of Vickers' poems were included. His poetry has also appeared in regional and national publications, including the prestigious **Texas Review**.

As a playwright, two of his one-act plays, **Ladies in Waiting** and **Swords and Roses**, have been

presented at East Central and also at Itawamba Community College. He is presently at work on an outdoor drama entitled **Whispers in the Wind**, concerning the early history of his home county in South Georgia.

For seven years he wrote a weekly column for **The Union Appeal** and **The Eastman Times Journal** in his hometown of Eastman, Georgia. A compendium of his Georgia articles titled **The Land Between the River** was published by the Evans Press of Savannah. Vickers was twice recognized by the Mississippi Press Association for having the best column in a Mississippi weekly newspaper.

In collaboration with Dr. George Boswell of the University of Mississippi, he helped organize the Mississippi Folklore Society in 1967. As a writer of Southern Folklore, Vickers has been published in the **Mississippi Folklore Register** and the **Journal of American Folklore**. In 1980, he was presented the Award of Merit by the Mississippi

Historical Society in recognition of his writing and lecturing on the subject of Mississippi folklore. In 1985, the Mississippi Folklore Society published a special edition of the Society's journal dedicated to Vickers.

Last October Vickers presented a lecture on “Southern Folklore” to a standing room only audience in the Fine Arts Center and in recognition of Arts and Humanities Month. Following his remarks, he was presented a Lifetime Achievement Award for Instruction by Mrs. Patsy Clark of Louisville, 1994 president of the ECCC Alumni Association. In addition, Vickers received an honorarium from the Mississippi Humanities Council which was presented by Dean of Instruction Dr. Phil Sutphin.

In demand as a public speaker, Vickers averages about 25 speaking engagements each year. During 1994-95, he spoke to such diverse gatherings as the Mississippi Community College Trustees' annual meeting on the Gulf Coast and the

Greater Decatur Chamber of Commerce annual banquet. He has also been a program participant in state and regional English conferences and seminars.

As the senior faculty person at East Central, Vickers has carried the college mace at the head of all academic professions since the inauguration of President Smith in 1985. At the 1995 graduation exer-

cises on May 12, Vickers will pass the mace to colleague Lucille Wood who will continue the tradition.

Although born in Alabama, Vickers grew up in Dodge County, Georgia and graduated from Chauncey High School. He attended George Peabody College in Nashville, Tennessee, where he received a bachelor's degree in English and social science, a

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Ovid Vickers

Arts Center honors Vickers

Ceremonies to name the East Central Community College Fine Arts Center in honor of a retiring faculty member. Dodge County native Ovid Vickers, whose service to the institution spans four decades will be held Saturday, May 6, on the Decatur, Mississippi, campus.

Program activities begin at 2:30 p.m. in Huff Auditorium followed by formal dedication of the Ovid Vickers Fine Arts Center scheduled on the grounds of the center. A reception will follow in Mabry Memorial Cafeteria.

College President Dr. Eddie M. Smith earlier announced the decision to name the Fine Arts

Center in Vickers' honor following unanimous approval of the college's Board of Trustees at its March meeting.

In making the announcement, Dr. Smith commented: "In the history of every institution there are those individuals who stand out because they are responsible for shaping the very nature of that institution and what it stands for. There is a legacy that endures because it reflects the character, the courage, the intellect, and the caring of the individual. Such is the legacy of Ovid Vickers at East Central Community College.

"He has not only been an excellent teacher but also an ac-

complished writer and speaker who has provided a multitude of services in those areas for East Central."

Dr. Richard Ethridge, social sciences instructor and Chairman of the Division of Social Science, Business Administration and Education and a longtime colleague of Vickers made the following remarks:

"Ovid Vickers has effectively helped thousands of students who have studied composition and literature with him over this forty-year career in college teaching. Vickers puts students first and foremost and accepts from them nothing less than

(See VICKERS, Page 9)

(Continued from Page 1)

their best."

Vickers, who began his association with East Central in 1955, said he considers the naming of the Fine Arts Center in his name "the greatest compliment of my life."

A Dodge County native, Vickers has served as chairman of the Division of Communications and Fine Arts since 1984 in addition to this teaching duties. He graduated from Chauncey High School and from Georgia Peabody College in Nashville, Tennessee, with B.A., M.A. and Ed.S. Degrees in English. He is the son of the late Ovid and Dovie Shadburn Vickers of the Godwinsville

Community. He taught for one year at Rhine High School and then served for two years in the military as an instructor in the Infantry School at Ft. Benning.

A person of many dimensions, Vickers is a published poet, a newspaper columnist, including contributions to the TJS, a public speaker, a practicing folklorist, a collector of anti-

ques, and a classroom teacher.

He is married to the former Carol Farish of Philadelphia, and they are the parents of three grown children.

As a senior faculty person, Vickers has carried the college mace at the head of all academic processions for the past ten years. At graduation exercises in May, he will pass the mace to the next senior faculty person.

Following his retirement in May, Vickers plans to travel extensively, continue with his writing, and maintain an office on the campus where he will serve from time to time as a member of the college's adjunct faculty.

unmanned out and we lost it, we could always depend on John to steer us from the last spot. "I've got blood!" became a familiar refrain.

For over a mile through ice-storm damaged woods we tracked, and I doubt that I've ever been as beat since I played college football. John twisted his knee. I pulled my Achilles tendon. Adams's bad knees got worse. Matt had not eaten all day. Yet no one ever suggested giving up, as long as we could find red spots.

Then I rounded a brush top, and there knelt the buck! As the poem says: "His eyes all agleam, his panting breath steam, his antlers so regally white! The gutsiest buck we ever would track, sat glaring at us in the lights."

The buck made a final dash, but died to the merciful knife, and we all said a silent prayer for him as his spirit passed on.

And I also said a prayer for a youngster who respected and loved his quarry enough to go to such lengths to end his suffering. It was an exhausting experience, but neces-

These are the gifts and talents that belong to teachers that stand alone, at least one notch above all others. There is an old and abusive saying - "Those who can, do so; those who can't, teach." That is not only untrue of the majority of dedicated men and women who struggle to impart knowledge and wisdom, but encourage development of students beyond the scope of a teacher's knowledge. Nothing could be more unselfish. In this vast array of teachers, each bringing their own unique perspective and values to the

Nursing Week May 14-20. Some of the events scheduled are:

Friday, May 12, 2 p.m. - Mothers Day Tea

Mon. May 15, 10:30 a.m.-Balloon Release & Picnic

Sun. May 14 - Mother's Day

Tuesday, May 16, 9 a.m. - Outdoor games on the patio such as bingo, ring toss, horse shoes game, arts and crafts. Games will be followed with refreshments.

Wednesday, May 17, 2 p.m. - Volunteer Appreciation Ice Cream Social - homemade ice cream and cake will be served.

Thursday, May 18, 1:30 - Employee Recognition Tea

Friday, May 19, 12-1 - Employee Cookout

Conehatta

By: Janette Haralson

Church Schedules:

Conehatta Baptist: 10:00 A.M.

Mrs. Elaine Graham at Decatur and visited other area relatives while there.

Mrs. Sybil Blecher of Quitman visited last Thursday in the home of her brother and sister-in-law Mr. and Mrs. Erby Pace.

Mrs. Jerry Taylor of Tupelo spent the past week-end as a guest in the home of her parents Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Mitchell.

Last week-end guest in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Horton were children and grandchildren and friends, Mr. and Mrs. Bob Horton of Meridian, Mrs. Travis Bonner, Jessica and friend Holly, Mandy and friend of Mobile Ala.

Newton County News & Social Event

By: Leora Watkins Chapman

Sister Susie G. Rayford, Sis. Lucy Brown, Sis. Velma Moore, Sis. Artie Gary, Sis. Sadie Johnson, Sis.

er, Bro. Albert McCune, Bro. Oscar McCune, Bro. Robert Thames, Bro. and Sis. Nora Pace, Bro. I. C. (Hop Cat) Nash.

The pastor and members of Galilee M.B. Church of Rose Hill M.B. Church invites everyone to come and worship with them each 2nd, 3rd, and 5th Sundays. Rev. David Bush of Livingston, Alabama is the pastor with Sis. Sammie J. Jones of Newton, Asst.

Sis. Chartie Wilson, Sis. Inez Thames, Sis. Idear Thames and Sis. Corene Thames are on the Sunny Hill Decatur Community sick list.

You are invited by the pastor and members of Collinsville M.B. Church to share Sunday School and Church Worship each Sunday. Sunday School at 9:45 a.m. and worship at 10:45. Bro. Keith Davis and Bro. Billy R. Chapman of Newton are the church musicians. Rev. Johnny Barns of Canton is the pastor.

If I missed any sick or shut-ins or social events, please call 683-3516 or write Leora Watkins Chapman, P. O. Box 473, Newton, MS 39345.

By Monteele Spivey Mashberg
At the end of this semester, Ovid Vickers will retire from a 40-year teaching career at East Central Community College. He is being interviewed, eulogized, and categorized, and is being given many well-deserved honors. But, unless you've sat in his classroom with a greed for the knowledge he taught, you've missed the essence of this teacher. As a public

This Little Engine - Too Bad: They'll Never Know What They've Missed

Waxing poetic about family, friends & Ovid

I hope your weekend was as good as mine. The weather was gorgeous, we had two of our favorite folks visiting from Montgomery, the children were fine, the cats were out chasing birds and God smiled down upon us all as we gathered to pay tribute to my brother-in-law, Ovid Vickers.

Carol and Ovid's children, Nona, Harriet and Ovid III, had originally planned a surprised reception in his honor to be held in Meridian. But when East Central Community College announced it would name their Fine Arts Center in honor of Ovid, plans changed.

Of course Ovid would have been just as retired, as just as happy without all the fanfare, but I think he was pleased with all the



**Becky
Smith**
Office Manager

festivities that went on last week honoring him upon his retirement.

"We're all exhausted," Carol told me last Friday afternoon. "Nona and I are hanging new curtains in the dining room. We finally

told Ovid to get out of here and go to his office until we were finished. His patience is wearing pretty thin at the moment."

Asking again what time to be in Decatur on Saturday and asking questions in general, Carol explained that Dr. Eddie Smith, college president, would welcome guests and would introduce her, the children, grandchildren, Ovid's sister and our mother. Then he would ask other family members to stand.

"Since Gay and Roger are staying at your house, make sure they stand," she said.

I told her I'd take care of it and later that night when they arrived I went over some of what Carol had told me about the next day's events and told them they were to stand when

Jerry and I did.

"We're really no relation to any of you," Gay said. "But that's just blood kin. Actually, I've been in the Farish family longer than Ovid."

"What about me," yelled Roger from the other room. "I can't wait until someone asks me how I fit into Ovid's family."

"Just tell them the truth, Jerry yelled back. "Tell them you are the manfriend of Ovid's wife's brother's ex-wife."

Got that? Gay is my brother's ex-wife. Which makes her Ovid's ex-sister-in-law. Roger is her friend. (By the way that marriage

Please see Column, page A-5

Column

from page A-4

lasted 30 years, so actually she is a member of the family). But that's another story. They both think the world of Ovid and they, like so many others, came to pay tribute to him Saturday.

The Convocation began in EC's Huff Auditorium at 2:30 in the afternoon. Several speakers told of Ovid's accomplishments while teaching the past 40 years at East Central. Over the years he has won so many awards for teaching, writing, folklore, etc. it would be impossible to name them all.

Last to speak was Ovid. As usual all eyes and ears were focused on him. He is the best storyteller you'll ever find

and folks are mesmerized by his voice. He was truly grateful to those who had planned his special day.

Leaving Huff Auditorium we walked to the Fine Arts Center for the naming of the Ovid S. Vickers Fines Arts Center. The newly erected brick monument inscribed with Ovid's name will be a lasting tribute to a man who personifies the fine arts in and out of the classroom.

Family members and close friends then gathered at the Vickers home for a time of fun and relaxation. Ovid's day had been perfect. No one could think of a single thing that could have made the day any better.

As we were living that night Jerry whispered to Ovid. "I know men don't say I love you to other men as often as we should. I truly want you to know what a wonderful friend you have been to us and we love you."

What a way to end the day!

Winston County Journal

Wednesday, May 10, 1995

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In making the announcement, Dr. Smith, Committee Chairman and a former student of Mr. Vickers, commented:

"It is obviously most appropriate that the College's Fine Arts Center be named in honor of Mr. Ovid Vickers. No one more represents 'fine arts' at East Central than Mr. Vickers. He has not only been an excellent teacher but also an accomplished writer and speaker who has provided a multitude of services in these areas for East Central Community College. There will never be another 'Ovid Vickers' on this campus; and the naming of the Fine Arts Center for his many contributions will serve as an everlasting tribute to this outstanding individual."

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Twice he has been named Academic Instructor of the Year by the ECCC Alumni Association, in 1967 and 1982. When the Mississippi Legislature inaugurated the Higher Education Appreciation Day, Working Toward Academic Excellence (HEADWAE) program to recognize college teachers in Mississippi who have made significant contributions to their respective institutions and to students, Vickers was the first East Central instructor to be so honored. He is also the recipient of a National Teaching Excellence Award presented by the University of Texas to community and junior college instructors in recognition of their innovative presentation of subject matter in their respective fields.

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When the University Press of Mississippi recently published a four-volume anthology of Mississippi writers, three of Vickers' poems were included. His poetry has also appeared in regional and national publications, including the prestigious Texas Review.

As a playwright, two of his one-act plays, *Ladies in Waiting* and *Swords and Roses*, have been presented at East Central and also at Itawamba Community College. He is presently at work on an outdoor drama entitled *Whispers in the Wind*, concerning the early history of his home county in South Georgia.

For seven years he wrote a weekly column for *The Union Appeal* and *The Eastman Times Journal* in his hometown of Eastman, Georgia. A compendium of his Georgia articles titled *The Land Between the River* was published by the Evans Press of Savannah. Vickers was twice recognized by the Mississippi Press Association for having the best column in a Mississippi weekly newspaper.

In collaboration with Dr. George Boswell of the University of Mississippi, he helped organize the Mississippi Folklore Society in 1967. As a writer of Southern Folklore, Vickers has been published in the Mississippi Folklore Register and the Journal of American Folklore. In 1980, he was presented the Award of Merit by the Mississippi Historical Society in recognition of his writing and lecturing on the subject of Mississippi folklore. In 1985, the Mississippi Folklore Society published a special edition of the Society's journal dedicated to Vickers.

Last October Vickers presented a lecture on "Southern Folklore" to a standing room only audience in the Fine Arts Center and in recognition of Arts and Humanities Month. Following his remarks, he was presented a Lifetime Achievement

Newton Record

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USPS 390-200

POST OFFICE BOX 60, NEWTON, MS 39345

WEDNESDAY, MAY 10, 1995

TWO SECTIONS

NUMBER 20



EAST CENTRAL DEDICATES FACILITY TO OVID VICKERS:

Dedication ceremonies naming the East Central Community College Fine Arts Center in honor of retiring faculty member Ovid S. Vickers were held Saturday, May 6, on the Decatur campus with over 300 well-wishers paying tribute to the longtime English instructor. Vickers, standing with Dr. Eddie Smith, EC President, is shown next to the recently constructed sign designating the facility's new name, along with family, friends and colleagues. Vickers was earlier praised for his 40 years service to the College by various individuals during convocation activities held in Huff Auditorium. A reception was later held in Mabry Memorial Cafeteria. (EC Photo)

College honors Dodge's Ovid Vickers

In the history of every institution there are those individuals who stand out because they are responsible for shaping the very nature of that institution and what it stands for. There is a legacy that endures because it reflects the character, the courage, the intellect, and the caring of the individual. Such is the legacy of Ovid Vickers at East Central Community College.

Vickers, instructor of English and Chairman of the Division of Communications and Fine Arts, will retire in May of 1995. Vickers' affiliation with East Central has spanned four decades.

In tribute to his many years of service to the institution, East Central will name the Fine Arts Center in his honor during dedication ceremonies scheduled at 2:30 pm. Saturday, May 6. Program activities will begin in Huff Auditorium followed by formal dedication of the Ovid S. Vickers Fine Arts Center outside the facility. A reception will follow in Mabry Memorial Cafeteria.

Vickers, who was born in Gadsden Alabama and grew up in Dodge County, Georgia graduated from Chauncey High School in Chauncey, Georgia, in 1948. After four years at George Peabody College in Nashville, Tennessee, he taught for one year at Rhine High School in Rhine, Georgia, and then served for two years in the U.S. Army as a teacher in the Infantry School at Fort Benning,

A person of many dimensions, Vickers is a published poet, a newspaper columnist, a public speaker, a practicing folklorist, a collector of antiques, a college division chair, and a classroom teacher.

When the University Press of Mississippi recently published a four-volume anthology of Mississippi writers, three of Vickers' poems were included. His poetry has also appeared in regional and national publications, including the prestigious *Texas Review*.

Also a playwright, two of his one-act plays, *Ladies in Waiting* and *Swords and Roses*, have been presented at East Central and also at Itawamba Community College. He is presently at work on an outdoor drama entitled *Whispers in the Wind*, concerning the early history of his home county in South Georgia.

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literature as a writer, speaker and teacher.

His myriad works and contributions earned him recognition as Distinguished Professor by the East Central Community College Alumni Association in 1967 and again in 1982. When the Mississippi Legislature inaugurated the Higher Education Appreciation Day to recognize college teachers in Mississippi who have made significant contributions to their institutions and to students, Vickers was the first East Central instructor to be so honored. He is also the recipient of a National Teaching Excellence Award presented by the University of Texas to community college instructors in recognition of their innovative presentation of subject matter in their fields.

As a member of the visiting committee of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools for reaffirmation accreditation of the humanities programs in high schools, Vickers has evaluated programs in such schools as Tate High School in Pensacola, Florida, and Meridian High School in Meridian, Mississippi.

In demand as a public speaker, Vickers averages about twenty-four

discussed in the following interview.)

Question: What are your thoughts now that your teaching career at East Central is nearing an end?

Mr. Vickers: I have not thought a great deal about it, but of course anybody that has been in a profession for a long period of time leaves that profession with some regret. Although I must say my regrets are few since it has been a very rewarding career, and I have enjoyed very much being at East Central. The fact is that I more or less grew up on this campus since I started teaching here when I was 24 years old. I have, within the last few days reflected back over the many experiences that I have had on this campus. I have thought about how much the college, the college family, the students and the college activities have all been so much a part of my life. Of course, my wife went to school here, my children are graduates of East Central and I have spent, as I said, a very rewarding 40 years on this campus.

Question: What have you enjoyed the most about teaching at East Central?

Mr. Vickers: I think the most rewarding thing is being able to

Georgia. He came to East Central in September of 1955.

Before joining the faculty at East Central, he earned the B.A. Degree in English and Social Science and a Master's degree in English from George Peabody College. In 1965, he returned to college with a teaching fellowship and earned the Ed.S. Degree in English and Education. He also did additional graduate work at the University of Southern Mississippi and Vanderbilt.

Bethel Baptist plans Bible school

Bethel Baptist Church on the Roddy Road would like to announce that Vacation Bible School will be held June 5-9 from 6:30 until 9 p.m. A kick-off cookout will be held at the church Saturday, June 3 at 6 p.m. All children up to eighth grade are invited to participate.

This year's theme is Family Celebration. A light meal will be provided and transportation will also be provided if necessary.

For more information, contact

Vickers.

For seven years, he wrote a weekly column for the Union, Mississippi, *Union Appeal* and also for the Eastman *Times Journal* in his hometown of Eastman, Georgia. A compendium of his Georgia articles titled *The Land Between the Rivers* was published by the Evans Press of Savannah. Vickers was twice recognized by the Mississippi Press Association for having the best column in a Mississippi weekly newspaper.

With his colleague, Dr. Richard Ethridge, Vickers inaugurated the Honors Program in English and History at East Central to offer advanced instruction to exceptionally bright students. He and Dr. Ethridge, after extensive preparation at the Phi Theta Kappa

Leadership Institute at Airlie, Virginia began the Phi Theta Kappa Leadership program funded by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation to offer leadership instruction to citizens of the community as well as to students of the college.

Vickers has been active in the Southeastern Conference on English in the Two-Year College, a nine-state organization of community college English instructors.

also been a program participant in state and regional English conferences and seminars.

In 1961, Vickers married Carol Farish, an East Central graduate from Neshoba County. Carol was a longtime employee of the college, serving as secretary to three presidents and also as a member of the English faculty. The Vickers have three children, all graduates of East Central. Nona, the oldest, is the mother of two and resides with her husband, John Russell Creel, in Atlanta. Harriet is Public Relations Director at Hinds Community College in Raymond, and Ovid III is a student at the University of Southern Mississippi.

As the senior faculty person, Vickers has carried the college mace at the head of all academic processions since the inauguration of President Eddie M. Smith in 1985. At graduation exercises in May, Vickers will pass the mace to Miss Lucille Wood who will continue the tradition.

When he leaves the East Central faculty in May, Vickers will join those previous members of the faculty such as Dean Bradford Tucker, Stella Newsome, Ethel Burton, and Frank Cross who have left behind a legacy of inspiration.

They have some good ideas, they have some thought provoking ideas. To be able to talk to students and exchange ideas with students has been the most rewarding thing. They, the students, have kept me on my toes. They are the ones who have kept me interested in learning. They forced me to stay abreast of the times. I sometimes had to rethink some of my concepts and ideas. All of this has been rewarding.

Question: Your service to East Central goes far beyond duties just associated with teaching. You have written and helped produce plays and musicals, had various writings published, served as the "voice" of East Central at many functions, plus served in other capacities. Do you enjoy doing all these things or do you just like to stay busy?

Mr. Vickers: I think it is a combination of three things. One is that I have always considered the extracurricular activities that I have participated in on campus and the various other things that I did while I was here to be part of my work. Also, many things I did on the campus I considered to be my duty. I also did extra activities because I found them to be rewarding experiences.

* Quality of picture and sound are dependent upon television also requires S-Video input to realize
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People

SECTION

B

The Meridian Star
Friday, June 16, 1995

Living Legend

East Central building renamed
for retiring prof Ovid S. Vickers

Professor Ovid S. Vickers may leave East Central Community College after 40 years, but his memory will forever be a part of the campus and its legacy.

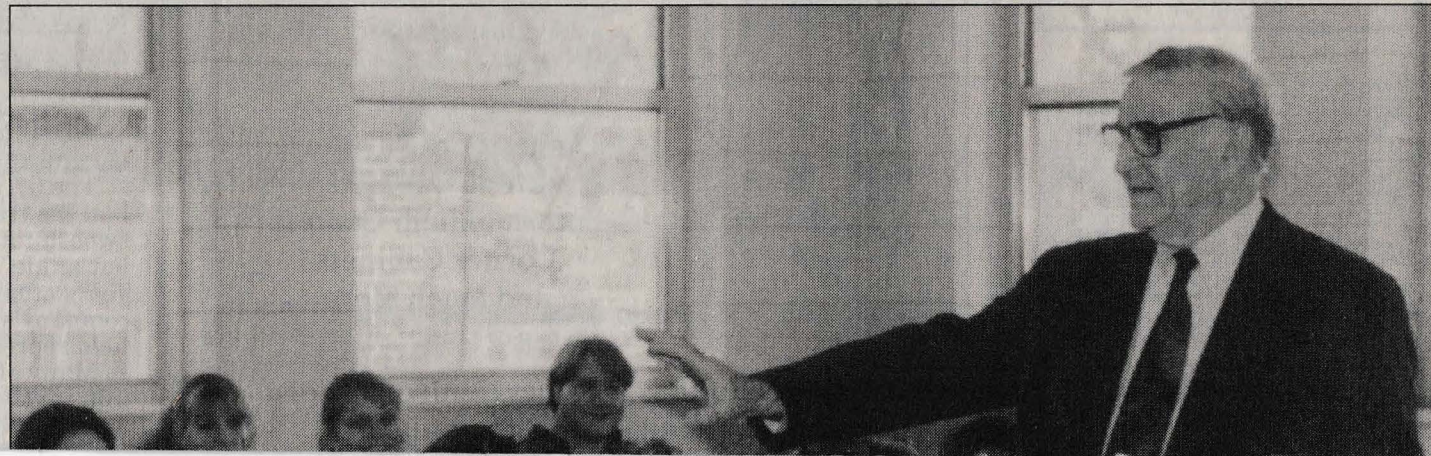
As a reminder of the man known as a "living legion" at East Central, the college recently renamed its Fine Arts Center



Vickers



In tribute to his 40 years of service to ECCC, the institution's Fine Arts Center was renamed in honor of Ovid S. Vickers in May. Vickers, right front, has served as an English instructor and chairman of the Division of Communications and Fine Arts at ECCC.



10	1 (CC) (61784)		"Relics" 1 (CC) (67968)		Family Secret" 1 (1828245)		Highway Patrol (8725142)		Journey Time (9188017)													
ESPN (13)	(6:30) Golf U.S. Open -- Second Round. From Shinnecock Hills in Southampton, N.Y. (R) (CC) (444968)		Baseball Tonight (798264)		Sportscenter (CC) (353500)		Baseball Tonight (719622)		Speedweek (229239)		Track and Field (467307)											
MAX (14)	Movie: Double Cross (1994, Suspense) Kelly Preston, Patrick Bergin. 1 'R' (910790)		Movie: Sliver ★½ (1993) Sharon Stone. A divorcee is drawn into her new lover's voyeuristic world. 1 'R' (CC) (8192516)			(10:20) Movie: Foreplay ★ (1994, Adult) Valentine Demy, Emi Lilly, Gary Zukor. 'NR' (86449061)			Softly From Paris (1739494)													
DISN (15)	Movie: Godzilla vs. the Sea Monster ★★ (1966, Science Fiction) Akira Takarada. (272142)		Movie: The Fly ★★★ (1958, Science Fiction) Vincent Price, Patricia Owens. (9920784)			(10:05) Movie: The Day of the Jackal ★★ (1973, Suspense) Edward Fox, Alan Badel. An experienced hit man is hired to kill Charles de Gaulle. 'PG' (28561784)																
TNT (16)	Movie: Operation Pacific ★★★ (1951, Drama) John Wayne, Patricia Neal, Ward Bond. Undersea battles help a sub commander reconcile his life. (6121697)			(9:25) Movie: Blood Alley ★★½ (1955, Adventure) John Wayne, Lauren Bacall. A merchant marine helps Chinese peasants escape Communists. (64653968)						Big Jim McLain ★★ (497388)												
TNN (17)	Yesteryear Scheduled: Connie Smith. (R) 1 (999332)		Music City Tonight Scheduled: Charlie Nagatani, Raspyni Brothers. 1 (124351)		Club Dance (R) 1 (153239)		Country News (R) 1 (427210)		Yesteryear Scheduled: Connie Smith. (R) 1 (408210)		Music City Tonight (928494)											
NICK (18)	Dream-Jeanie (385123)		Bewitched (738622)		I Love Lucy (CC) (745121)		Mary Tyler Moore (385178)		Taxi (345061)		Taxi "Friends" (332622)		Bob Newhart (500581)		Dick Van Dyke (699429)		Dragnet (357806)		Superman (863697)		Lucy Show (467524)	
USA (19)	Murder, She Wrote "Harbinger of Death" (CC) (530697)		Movie: Ghost Dad ★★ (1990, Comedy) Bill Cosby. A new ghost is given three days to see to his kids' security. 1 (CC) (616061)			Duckman (R) (CC) (237603)		Movie: She ★½ (1985) Sandahl Bergman, Harrison Muller. An immortal Amazon queen helps two men rescue their friend. (378210)														
LIFE (20)	Intimate Portrait (R) (143790)		Movie: He's Not Your Son ★★ (1984) Donna Mills, Ken Howard. Two couples learn that their babies were switched at birth. (399166)			Carly Simon Live at Grand Central (R) (142061)		Girls' Night Out 1 (CC) (869351)		Unsolved Mysteries												
FAM (21)	Evening Shade (CC) (177546)		Evening Shade (CC) (896245)		Rescue 911 1 (CC) (156264)		700 Club (628500)		Racing Weekly (880719)		Rescue 911 1 (CC) (793239)		Bonanza: The Lost Episodes "Shadow of a Hero" (863177)		Paid Program (661388)							
AMC (24)	Sing a Song (468351)		Movie: There's No Business Like Show Business ★★½ (1954, Musical) Ethel Merman, Donald O'Connor, Mitzi Gaynor. (165993)			Movie: River of No Return ★★½ (1954) Robert Mitchum, Marilyn Monroe, Rory Calhoun. (937871)			Sing a Song (713448)		Movie: There's No Business Like Show Business (310055)											
CNBC (25)	Mike Schneider (6398429)		Equal Time (8696513)		Rivera Live (Live Phone-In) (9292500)		Charles Grodin (Live Phone-In) (9385264)		Real Personal (5672448)		Simpson Trial (5585968)		Rivera Live (R) (1739332)		Charles Grodin (R) (8248630)							
BET (26)	Roc 1 (CC) (909239)		Music Inside Out (620210)		Video Soul Top 20 (760185)							Roc 1 (CC) (685887)		News (R) (694535)		Jazz Central (621974)						
A&E (28)	Biography "Rock Hudson: Tall, Dark and Handsome" (R) (996239)		Investigative Reports "Bad Trip to Edgewood" (R) (591577)		Ancient Mysteries "Memphis: Capital of Egypt" (R) (696121)		Law & Order "Star Struck" (988210)		Biography "Rock Hudson: Tall, Dark and Handsome" (R) (672887)		Investigative (827982)											
DISC (29)	Fangs! "The Prince of Predators" (R) (994871)		Wings "Nighthawk -- Secrets of the Stealth" (R) (896149)		Wild West (R) (Part 1 of 10) (990055)		Fangs! "The Prince of Predators" (R) (993142)		Wings "Nighthawk -- Secrets of the Stealth" (R) (687719)		Wild West (R) (832814)											
TLC (30)	Great Cities of the Ancient World (811500)		Great Cities of the Ancient World (900448)		Great Cities of the Ancient World (817784)		Great Cities of the Ancient World (R) (810871)		Great Cities of the Ancient World (R) (506806)		Great Cities (493562)											
ESPN2 (31)	Arena Football Memphis Pharoahs at Iowa Barnstormers. (Live) (4532516)				Track and Field U.S. Outdoor Championships. From Sacramento, Calif. (Live) (4751535)				Talk2 (1678500)													
SPSN (32)	Auto Racing SCCA Trans-Am -- Detroit Grand Prix. From Belle Isle, Mich. (Taped) (1735516)				APSL Soccer Montreal Impact at Seattle Sounders. (Live) (6213516)				Press Box (9664413)				Track and Field (8240098)									
VCH (37)	Movie: Stargate ★★½ (1994) Kurt Russell. An artifact found in Egypt is the doorway to another world. 1 (CC) (6371719)				Movie: Stargate ★★½ (1994) Kurt Russell. An artifact found in Egypt is the doorway to another world. 1 (CC) (7809090)				Movie: Stargate ★★½ (1994, Science Fiction) Kurt Russell, James Spader. 1 (CC) (4629448)													
VC2 (38)	(6:00) Movie: Hot Line: Looking for Love (1995) 1 (3209036)		Movie: Timecop ★★½ (1994) Jean-Claude Van Damme. A time-traveling policeman tackles a corrupt senator. 1 (CC) (8259531)			Hot Body Video Magazine: Double Trouble (458528)		Inside Out: Stimulating Stories (6368245)		Cyborg Soldier ★½ (9990727)												
VACT (39)	Life Choices (5909577)		Man Alive (2181245)		VISN Agenda (4119603)		Family Enrichment Series: Amer. Christian History (4033239)		Gospel Jams (9817516)		Capital News (9826264)		Lawson Live (8987055)		Heart of the Matter (8082500)		VISN Agenda (R) (3602659)					
NLO (40)	Taking Our City (4126993)		Frederick K. Price (4039413)		Praise the Lord (4032500)				Shower of Power (8076993)		Charisma Mag. (8075210)		Jess Moody (9838307)									
SHOW (44)	Movie: Greedy ★★ (1994) Michael J. Fox. Avaricious relatives scramble to inherit an uncle's riches. 1 'PG-13' (CC) (132239)				Outer Limits "Quality of Mercy" (536871)		Boxing McCallum vs. Tiozzo. From Lyon, France. (Same-day Tape) (981887)						Dark Angel (5819272)									



after the long-
time English instructor, who, at
65, is retiring.
... I must say my regrets are
few since it has been a very
rewarding career, and I have
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Central," said Vickers. "The fact
is that I more or less grew up on
this campus since I started teach-
ing here when I was 24 years
old."

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choice

**Celebrate
FATHER'S
DAY
with us!**

**Hon
North**

*You are invited to
attend a Convocation
honoring
Ovid Sparks Vickers
upon the naming of the
Fine Arts Center
in his honor.
Saturday, May 6, 1995
East Central Community College
Huff Auditorium
Two-thirty o'clock in the afternoon*

* * * * *

*Reception immediately following
in the Mabry Memorial Cafeteria*

Come and have breakfast.



Daddy,

I am so proud of you
and all the wonderful work
you have done through the
years. I hope you enjoy
retirement as much as you
enjoyed teaching for 40 years.
Thank you for always being
such a fine example for us
to follow! Love, Nena

5-6-95

I LOVE YOU LOVE
CAROL ANNE GEE

Dear Man,
I'm proud of you, you've
earned what you're getting
by a long shot.

Love Mom

with great love and
admiration - Carol

May it bring you
everything
you are looking forward to!

Congratulations

Hey Pop,

Now my name is on two
buildings. No one else
can say that. Love,

David S. Visher III

Dear Daddy,

Congratulations to the person
I admire above all others. You
have always been a great
father, mentor, and friend.
I've very proud of you
and all you've
accomplished.
Love,
Harriet

ACADEMIC SYMBOLS AND REGALIA

THE COLLEGE MACE

The college Mace, carried at the head of the academic procession by the senior member of the faculty, symbolizes the authority of the office of the president. Originating in the Middle Ages as a hand weapon used by those who guarded officials, the Mace now represents a ceremonial symbol of office in academic processions. The East Central Community College Mace was designed and crafted by Mr. Larry Blackburn and Mr. Richard Clark, both graduates of East Central and now members of the faculty. The four sides of the Mace immediately under the flame have engraved on them the name of the college, the five supporting counties, the curricula offered, and the activities available to students.

THE PRESIDENTIAL MEDALLION

The presidential medallion worn by Dr. Eddie M. Smith symbolizes the office of the president of East Central Community College. It was first worn on April 30, 1986, by Dr. Smith on the occasion of his inauguration as the sixth president of East Central. Suspended on a red, white, and blue ribbon of satin, the medallion displays the name and location of the college and the college motto, "With You in Mind." The names of the six men who have served East Central as president are engraved on the reverse side.

THE ACADEMIC APPAREL

The wearing of academic apparel originated in the Middle Ages. Drafty academic buildings necessitated the wearing of capes with hoods attached for warmth.

The gown is usually of black material. Bachelor's gowns have long pointed sleeves; master's have full-length square sleeves; and doctor's have full, round, open sleeves with three velvet bars on each sleeve. The doctor's gowns are also faced with panels of velvet down the front.

The cap, the square mortarboard, is worn for all ranks and degrees. Switching of the tassel from right to left is customary when a degree is awarded.

The hood indicates the source of the degree. Candidates for associate in arts and bachelor's degrees do not wear hoods. Master's hoods are approximately three and one half feet in length and doctor's are approximately four feet. The silk lining bears the colors of the college or university from which a degree was received. The colors of the velvet panel indicate the academic discipline in which the degree was earned.

**EAST CENTRAL
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE**

**GRADUATION
EXERCISES**

**SIXTY-SIXTH GRADUATING CLASS
WARRIOR STADIUM**

**MAY 12TH
NINETEEN HUNDRED AND NINETY-FIVE
8:00 P.M.**

**RESOLUTION OF COMMENDATION
for
OVID S. VICKERS**

WHEREAS, Ovid S. Vickers retired from full-time employment with East Central Community College effective May 31, 1995; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Vickers was an active member of the English faculty at said institution for forty years and in such capacity taught English composition and literature classes, speech classes, honors classes, leadership development classes, directed plays and served as Chair of the Division of Fine Arts for eight years; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Vickers distinguished himself as an outstanding instructor with thousands of students who took his courses, as a valuable mentor and colleague for members of his Division and college personnel as a whole, and as a reliable, moral, and gentlemanly role model for all who knew him; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Vickers brought honor to himself and East Central Community College through his extensive involvement and leadership in professional organizations and societies within the area, state, region, and nation; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Vickers researched, wrote, and published myriad articles, poems, columns, and plays for journals, periodicals, newspapers, and stage presentations further enhancing his reputation as a scholar and the standing and prestige of East Central Community College; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Vickers spoke incessantly to civic, community, and religious organizations in behalf of East Central Community College and actively recruited students for the institution through conducting workshops, speaking to classes, judging various events, and visiting in support district high schools; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Vickers will be sorely missed as a full-time faculty member at East Central Community College;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of East Central Community College, duly assembled on June 22, 1995, at Decatur, Mississippi, that commendations for excellent leadership, scholarship, and productivity in behalf of the institution on his part over a forty year period be expressed by this body, and that sincere wishes for many years of happiness in retirement be extended to Ovid S. Vickers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be presented to Ovid S. Vickers.

Mr. V. C. Manning, Chair
Board of Trustees
East Central Community College

RESOLUTION OF COMMENDATION
for
OVID S. VICKERS

WHEREAS, Ovid S. Vickers retired from full-time employment with East Central Community College effective May 31, 1992; and

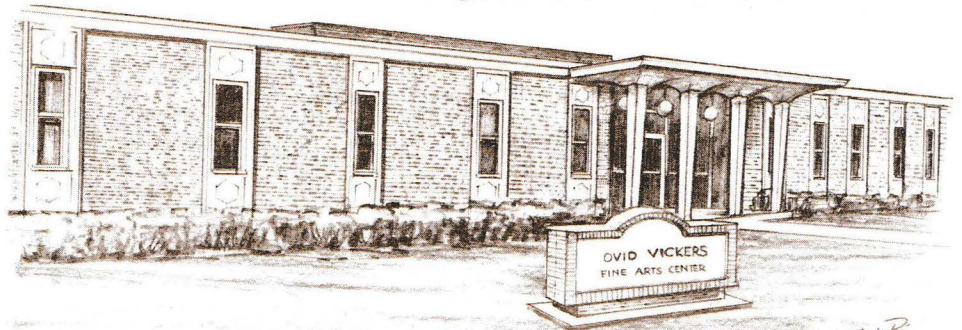
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an outstanding courses, as a Division and e, moral, and

East Central and leadership in area, state,

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community, and nity College



*Ovid Vickers Fine Arts Building
East Central Community College
Decatur, Mississippi*



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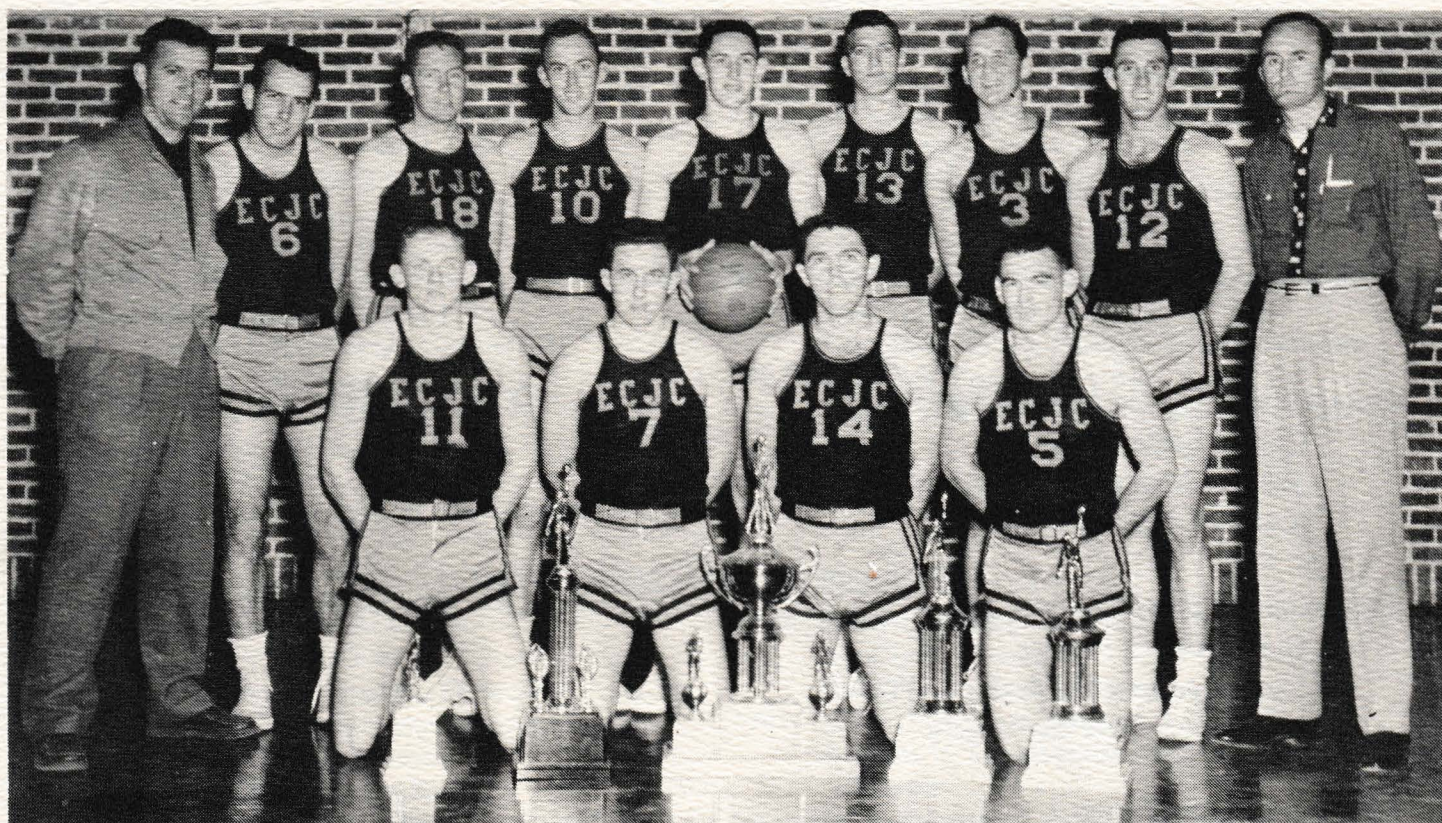
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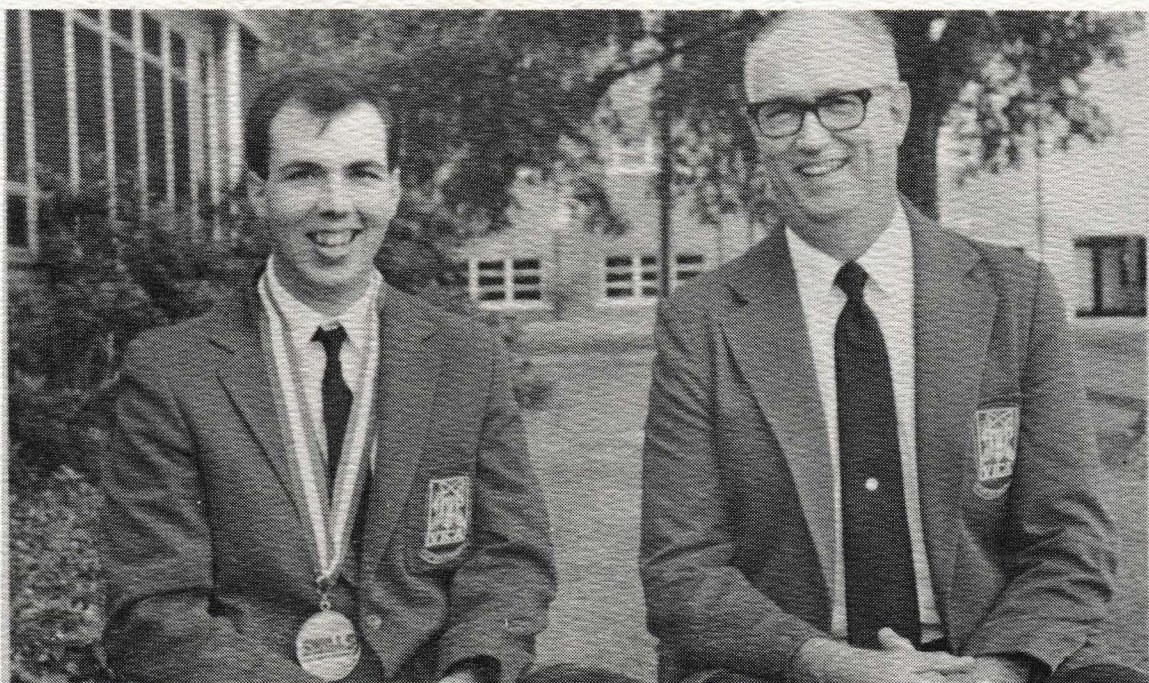
October 7, 1995 • East Central Community College • Decatur, Mississippi

HOMECOMING

Warrior Pride in Ninety-Five

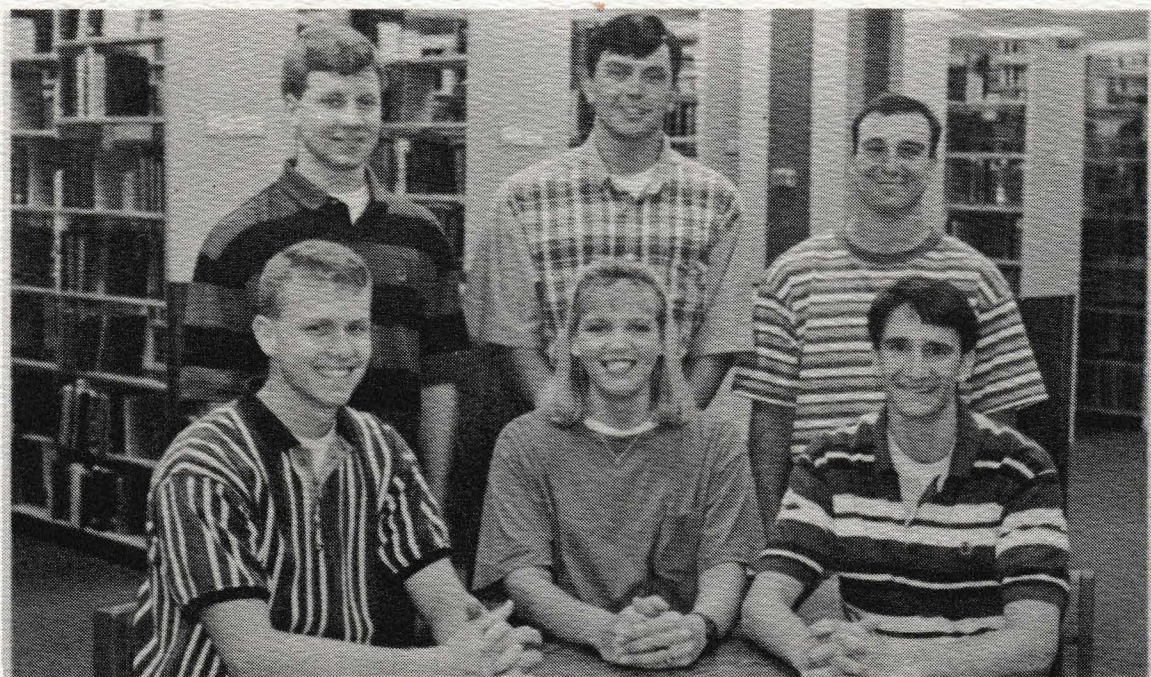


Members of the 1954-55 Warrior men's basketball team being honored during the 1995 Homecoming activities are (kneeling from left) Pee Wee Crocker, Morris Hurst, Leo Russell, Derrell Thomas and (standing from left) Coach Clayton Blount, Joe Lee Johnson, John Williams, Joe Clark, Wayne Tullos, James Griffin, Johnny Alexander, A. G. Robinson and Tom Burt, manager.



NATIONAL VICA WINNER

Randy Germany (left) of Union displays the medal he won for placing second in the Collision Repair Technology division of the 29th annual Skills USA Championships. Germany, a 1995 honor graduate of ECCC, advanced to the national competition after winning first place honors in the state contest. With Germany is Conrad Germany, ECCC auto body and fender repair technology instructor, who is also the outstanding student's father.



NJCAA ALL-AMERICANS

These former ECCC athletes have been named National Junior College Athletic Association Academic All-Americans for the 1994-95 school year. Recipients of this prestigious honor must have lettered in one or more sports and have a 3.6 or better GPA. Honorees include (seated from left) Mike Hurst of Hickory, distinguished (3.8 GPA), basketball; Dane Vance, basketball, and Philip Prince, basketball, both from Philadelphia; and (standing from left) Kris Rigdon of Decatur, tennis; Brooks Bryan of Philadelphia, baseball; and Chad Ardoin of Pascagoula, baseball.

The

Warrior



The Official Publication of
The East Central Community College
Alumni Association



Vickers, Ovid
(Pages 3 & 34-35)

East Central Alumni Association
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East Central Community College
Decatur, Mississippi 39327

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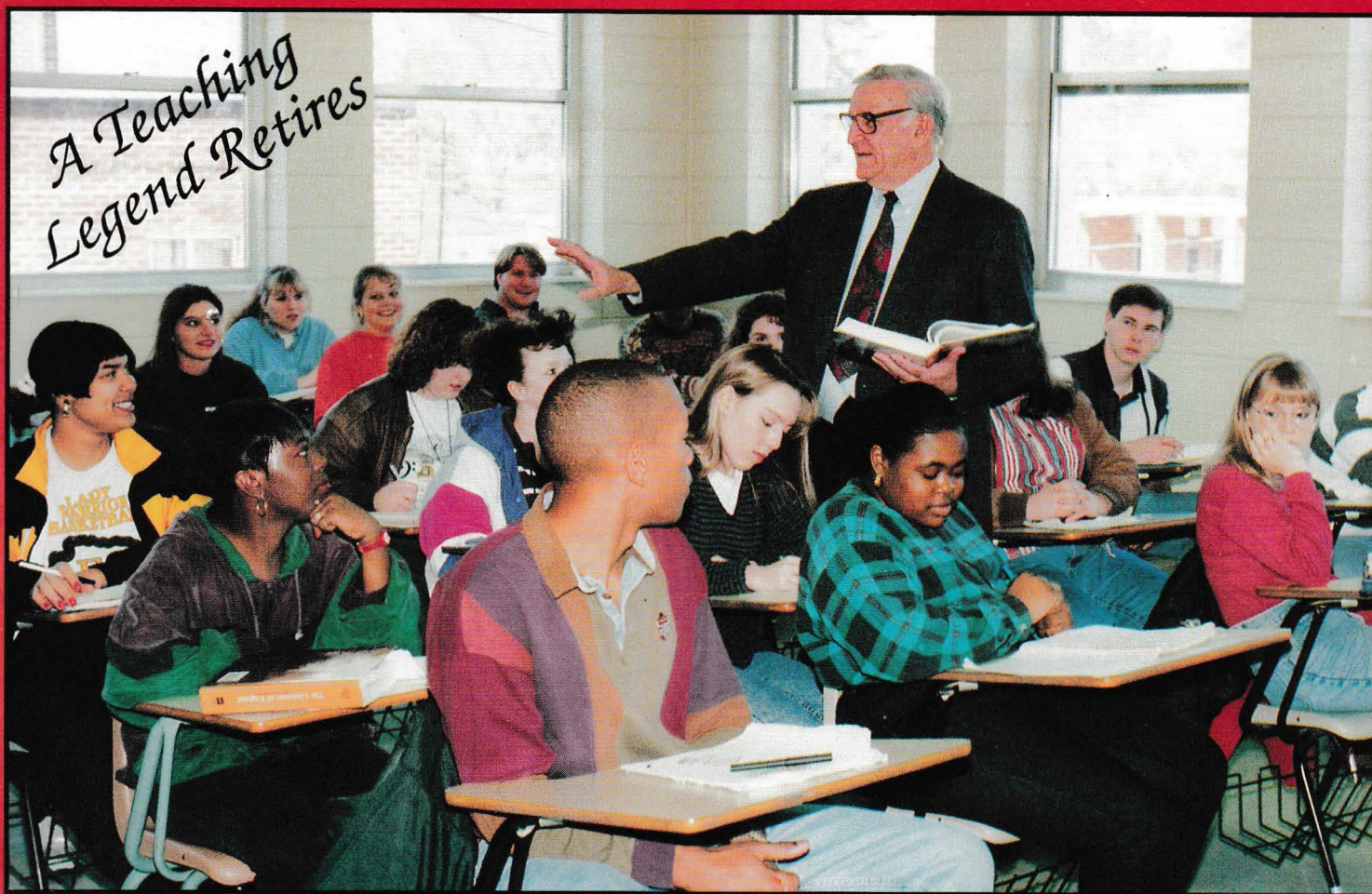
They've Got Warrior Pride!

These East Central football cheerleaders show they have "Warrior Pride in '95," the theme for this year's Homecoming celebration. From left are Kelly Melton of Enterprise, Jeana Santmyer of Newton, Stephanie Rascoe of Stonewall, Emily Jenkins of Shubuta and Jennifer Thomas of Philadelphia, who are pictured during the Warriors' season opening contest at Holmes Community College.

ECCC
WITH YOU IN MIND

The

Warrior



*A Teaching
Legend Retires*

The Official Publication of
The East Central Community College
Alumni Association

Vickers, Ovid
(Pages 3-7 & 30)

ECCC
WITH YOU IN MIND

East Central Alumni Association
P.O. Box 129
East Central Community College
Decatur, Mississippi 39327

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Receive PTK Honors

Various awards were presented to East Central Community College's Theta Xi Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa during the international honor society's regional convention held in Tupelo. Individual honors were presented to College President Dr. Eddie M. Smith (far right), who was selected Distinguished Alumnus, and sophomore Mike Hurst (second from left) of Hickory who was inducted into the region's Order of the Golden Key. Dr. Smith serves as Presidential Ambassador for the Mississippi-Louisiana area and Hurst is president of the college chapter. Shown with chapter awards are advisors Mrs. Ann Burkes and Dr. Shelby Harris. Among honors received include the Service Hallmark Award, the David Leonard Travel Award and the Brotherhood Award, shared jointly with the Alpha Mu Beta Chapter at Holmes Community College, Grenada campus. The ECCC chapter received a plaque of appreciation for hosting the 1994 regional leadership conference and was elected regional president for the upcoming year. A chapter member will later be named to serve in this position. The chapter was also recognized as a 5-Star Chapter signifying the highest level of achievement a chapter can be awarded.

ECCC
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The

Newton Record

USPS 390-200



EAST CENTRAL DEDICATES FACILITY TO OVID VICKERS:
Dedication ceremonies naming the East Central Community College Fine Arts Center in honor of retiring faculty member Ovid S. Vickers were held Saturday, May 6, on the Decatur campus with over 300 well-wishers paying tribute to the longtime English instructor. Vickers, standing with Dr. Eddie Smith, EC President, is shown next to the recently constructed sign designating the facility's new name, along with family, friends and colleagues. Vickers was earlier praised for his 40 years service to the College by various individuals during convocation activities held in Huff Auditorium. A reception was later held in Mabry Memorial Cafeteria. (EC Photo)

In Rally

own Volunteer Fire Department will sponsor a "Rally" on the grounds of the fire department. Participating will include those for statewide. All-day event will also feature entertainment. Now to attend, have lunch, be entertained to say. Location is approximately three miles off Highway 489. For a date wishing to schedule a speaking time call 75-9212, or Harmon Crosby at 775-3309.

Calendar Of Events

In Honoring McGowans

Watercolor Workshop

The Newton Arts Council will sponsor a Watercolor Workshop with Mary Jane Cox instructing June 12, 13 and 14th. Amateurs and pros are invited to attend for expert assistance and really have fun turning out their own artworks. Additional information later.

ECCC VICA Fundraiser

Saturday, May 13, 8 a.m. - 1 p.m., there will be a car wash at the Sunburst Bank, Decatur. Also cosmetology services and a rummage sale at the ECCC

Gibbstown

The Gibbstown Political Rally Candidates' offices. This is a lowship. Plan candidates have on the Lawre or for candid Winstead at 7

Principal and Teacher, in the Hickory School and Decatur. The event will take place in the Hickory High School Gym on Sunday, May 14, from 3:00 until 5:00 p.m. The public is cordially invited to attend this special occasion.

IHS Class of '55 Reunion

Newton High School Class of 1955 invites teachers, schoolmates and friends to visit at our 40th year class reunion. Saturday, May 13, 1995, at the Newton Station Depot at 4 p.m.

Beulah H. Baseball Cookout

The Beulah Hubbard Baseball Association will host its annual chicken cookout on Saturday, May 13. Chicken plates will cost \$4 and be served from 1 until 4 at the baseball fields. A political speaking will be held from 11 until 1. Any candidate interested in participating may contact Ricky Harrison (774-9595) or Rickey Chaney. (774-8852).

Annual Senior's Picnic

The Multi-Agency Council is sponsoring its second annual Senior's Picnic on May 20, 1995. The picnic will start at 11 a.m. at the American Legion Hut located on Hwy. 15 in Decatur. Food, games, prizes and entertainment will be provided free of charge to all Newton County residents age 55 or older. No reservation is required. Make plans to attend.

Classes For Adults

Newton Career Center is offering classes for adults. The following classes will be offered:

Job Applications, Interviewing, and Resumes. 9-11, May 31 - June 2nd.

Furniture Refinishing - 9 a.m. May 31 and other days TBA

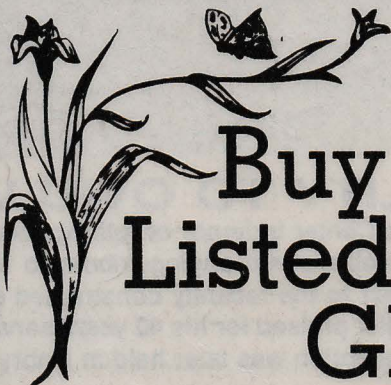
Lawnmower & Small Engine Maintenance - 9 - 11 a.m. May 31 - June 2 & June 5-7.

Time To Buy a Home Computer - 9-11 a.m. May 31.

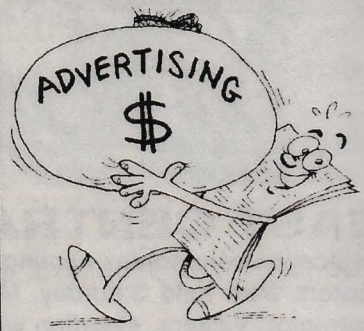
Introduction to Personal Computer - 5-7 p.m. June 19-22 (Register by June 8) Register by May 30 at Newton Career Center. Call Mrs. Wagner or Ms. Kelly at 683-6338 for more information.

To Collect Employment Data

The U.S. Census Bureau will collect data on employment and unemployment from area residents the week of May 14-20, according to Alfonso Mirabal, director of the bureau's Dallas regional office. Census employees under the direction of the Dallas regional office will visit households in Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Texas. The local labor force data will contribute to the national employment and unemployment picture to be released June 2 by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Information supplied by individuals to the Census Bureau is kept confidential by law. Only statistical totals are published.



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The message, it seems, is in the medium. More ad dollars are spent on newspapers than in television, radio, direct mail, maga

Fine arts center
named in honor
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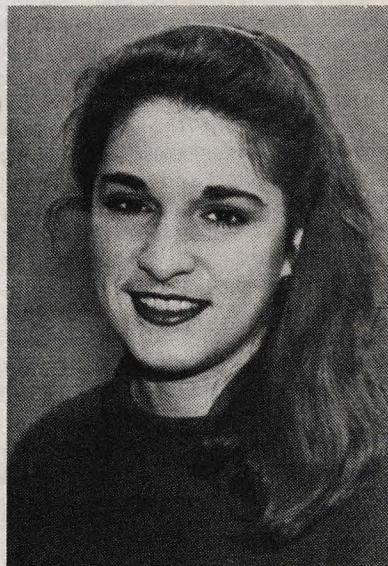
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EC represented
well at
All-Star Game

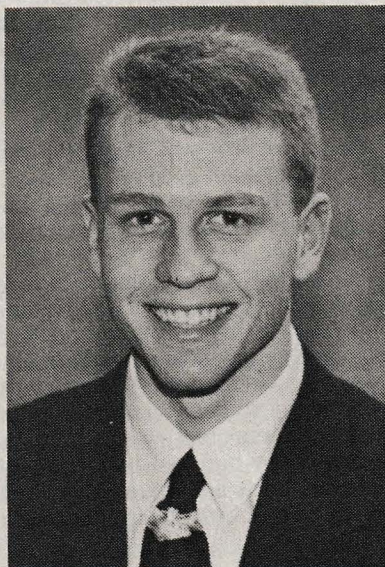
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Volume 49, No. 6

A Student Publication of East



Lorrie Howell



Mike Hurst



Ronda Jones

Six students named to ECC

Six students have been selected for inclusion in the 1994-95 East Central Hall of Fame, the highest honor a student can achieve at East Central. Selected for this honor are sophomores Lorrie Howell, Mike

selected to Who's Who Among Students in American Junior Colleges.

Ronda Jones is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ronnie Jones of Forest. She has served as president of the

member of Phi Theta Kappa. Prince is also an Athletic All-American Nominee.

Kris Rigdon of Decatur is the son of Ms. Rita Reynolds of Hattiesburg

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Sessums, Hurst
receive academic
honors

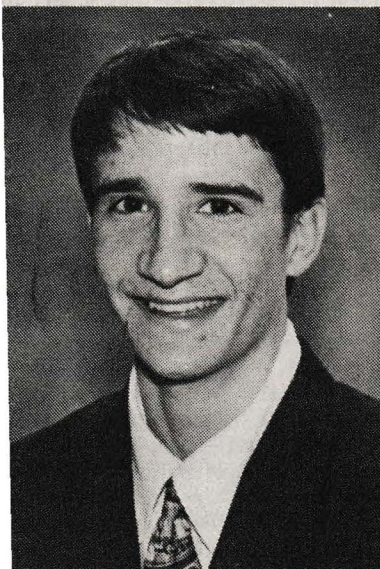
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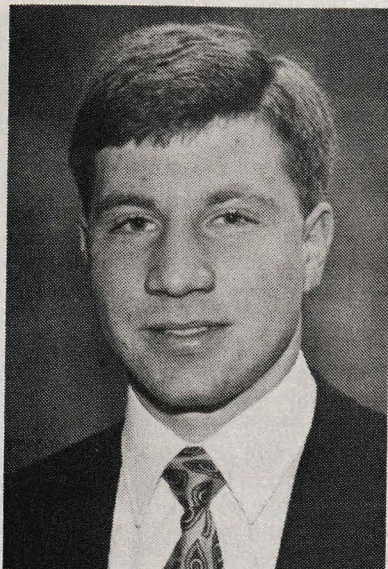
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entral Community College

May 8, 1995



Philip Prince



Kris Rigdon



Mandy Sessums

C Hall of Fame

member of the Warrior Corps, the
Warrior tennis team and the ECCC
band. Kris is vice-president of Alpha
Alpha Epsilon and president of the
Wesley Foundation. He was named
to Who's Who Among Students in

daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Max
Sessums of Union. Mandy served as
captain of the Scholars Bowl Team
and reporter for Mu Alpha Theta.
She is a member of Phi Theta Kappa,
the Student Education Association

was also selected as the outstanding
Humanities student and represented
East Central at the Natchez
Literary Festival. She is a President's
List Scholar, National Dean's
List Scholar and a member of the

Hurst, Ronda Jones, Philip Prince, Kris Rigdon and Mandy Sessums. Lorrie is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. David Howell of Carthage. She is very active in all aspects of college life. She is a member of the Warrior Band, the Collegians, and the Warrior Corps. She also participated in the recent production of "Annie" presented by the ECCC Players, for which she serves as secretary. Lorrie is also a member of Phi Theta Kappa where she is vice president of the Service Hallmark. She is a President's List Scholar and is on the National Dean's List. Lorrie was also selected to Who's Who Among American Junior Colleges.

Mike Hurst is the son of Mr. and Mrs. David Michael Hurst, Sr. of Hickory. Mike has served as president of the Student Body Association and Phi Theta Kappa. He is also secretary of Mu Alpha Theta, an honorary math organization; a member of Alpha Alpha Epsilon; a member of the Warrior Corps; and a member of the President's Council. In addition, Mike has been a member of the men's basketball team for the past two seasons. He is a Dean's List Scholar, an All-American Scholar, and an Academic All-American Scholar Nominee for Phi Theta Kappa. Mike was also

Warrior Corps, vice chairman of the President's Council, and co-captain of the cheerleading squad. In addition, Ronda is a member of the Diamond Girls, the ECCC Players, the modeling squad and the election committee. Ronda represented the freshman class as Homecoming Maid last year and was selected as Homecoming Queen for 1994-95. She received a U. S. Achievement Award in mathematics and was selected to Who's Who Among Students in American Junior Colleges. Ronda also led a leadership seminar sponsored by the Warrior Corps and Phi Theta Kappa, as well as serving as secretary for the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

Philip Prince of Philadelphia is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Jimmy Prince. He has been a member of the Warrior basketball team for the past two years and served as captain for the past season. He was also selected as the Most Valuable Player for the 1994-95 season, as well as the Best Offensive Player. He was named to the Mississippi Association of Community and Junior Colleges All-Star Team and was an All-State selection. Philip also served as president for the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. He was named to Who's Who Among Students in American Junior Colleges and a

and the grandson of Mr. and Mrs. Wilson Taylor of Decatur. Kris has served as Programs vice-president for Phi Theta Kappa and as president of Mu Alpha Theta. He is a

ECCC honor

Initiation ceremonies to induct new members of East Central Community College's Theta Xi Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, an international honor society for two-year colleges, were recently held on the Decatur campus. Membership in the prestigious organization is by invitation only, with freshmen required to have at least a 3.4 grade point average and sophomores, a 3.3 GPA. Dr. Shelby Harris and Mrs. Ann Burkes serve as advisors.

New members include the following:

LEAKE COUNTY: Jennifer Alexander, Marla Lee Chamblee, Heather Dittmer, Katherine N. Faulkner, Mistee Heather Hollis, Peggy Jennifer Jenkins, Lori Ann King, Justin James Schmidt and Jodi Denise Stribling, all of Carthage; Dawn Suzanne Cockrell and Miranda Lyn Rowan, both of Lena; Tiffany Larae McDill Lathem, Walnut Grove; and Heather E.

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ECCC class favorites

These East Central Community College students have been selected class favorites for the 1994-95 term. Seated from left are freshmen Nepo Scott of Demopolis, Ala.; Tosha Madison and Kyra Fulton, both of Philadelphia; and Shannon Harrison and O. J. McNichols, both of Union. Sophomore favorites include, standing, from left, Craig Wolf of Forest, Michele McAdory of Noxapater, Kimberly Moore of Philadelphia, Jacqueline Cain of Carthage and Vincent Spencer of Philadelphia.

American Junior Colleges as well as the National Dean's List. Kris is an All-American Scholar and received a national engineering award.

Mandy Rae Sessums is the

tion, the Warrior Corps, and the EC Fashion Squad. As a member of the ECCC Players, Mandy played the role of Truvy in the college production of "Steel Magnolias." Mandy

Phi Theta Kappa All USA Academic Team. Mandy was also selected as the HEADWAE Student and named to Who's Who Among Students in American Junior Colleges.

or society inducts new members

McMillan, Edinburg.

NESHOBA COUNTY: Michael Brooks Bryan, Brad Burns, Robert Ernest Courtney, Kyra Lee Fulton, Amanda Jill Goldman, Shannon Dawn Jenkins, Emily Jill Kirkland, Christy Leann Madison, Tyler Aaron Nowell, Rhonda D. Sanderford, David Craig Vowell and Michael David Wilson, all of Philadelphia.

NEWTON COUNTY: Amanda Danielle Breland, Angelia Sue Cockerham, Marinda Joy Comans, Jean Kristi Gordon, Charlie Max Hardin, Steven Trent Mabry, Bruce Scott Posey and Louis Madison Skinner, all of Union; Valeria Buggs,

John Bradley Gipson, Brian A. Parks, Jonathan Stewart Sharp, Rhonda Lynn Sheely, Ethel Barnes Tumbling, Jason Vanderporten and Martha Renee Wheeler, all of Newton; Ginger Carter, Carla Renee Glenn, Melissa Shea McLelland Gloria S. Rigdon, Jody Bucannon Riser and Staci Michelle Strebeck, all of Decatur; Jennifer Hitt, Misty Renee Laird and Ryan Michael Smith, all of Little Rock; Angela Cleveland, Hickory; Heather Lynn McDill, Conehatta; and Alex Savell, Chunky.

SCOTT COUNTY: Angela Gaye Anthony and Bobby Dewayne

Viverette, both of Sebastopol; Melanie Ann Cleveland, Joseph Crain, Teresa K. Dunlap, Brian Eure, Wendy J. Nicholas, Jewellia Rochelle Reid and Joseph T. White, all of Forest; Brad M. Gressett and Jeff S. Vance, both of Lake; Christopher Gomillion, Harperville; and Joseph Brian Parker, Morton.

WINSTON COUNTY: Amy Lynn Anthony, Noxpater; and Tammy Gale Sanders and Robert Dowdle Thomas, both of Louisville.

OUT-OF-DISTRICT: Gary Davis, East Chatham, New York; Michael M. McWhirter, Collinsville; and Kevin Mann Nelson, Clinton.

Commencement set for May 12

Commencement activities are planned at 8 p.m. Friday, May 12 for 263 candidates for graduation at East Central Community College in Decatur, announced Dr. Phil A. Sutphin, Dean of Instruction. This year's ceremony, which marks the College's 66th commencement program, will be held at Warrior Stadium.

The commencement address will be delivered by Mandy Seesums of Union who was earlier selected East Central's HEADWAE (Higher Education Appreciation Day—Working Toward Academic Excellence) Student for 1994-95. Sessums was also named to the Phi Theta Kappa Academic All-State First Team. Other students serving in program participants include Philip Prince of Philadelphia, in education; Inez Cager of Union, in education; and Mike Hurst of Hickory, in education.

Degrees and certificates will be awarded by College President Dr. Edie M. Smith and Dean of Instruction Dr. Phil A. Sutphin. Dr. Smith will also provide additional remarks.

Also scheduled to take place during the commencement program is a passing-of-the-mace ceremony in retiring English instructor Ed Vickers to faculty member Willie Wood who will then become East Central Community College instructor with the longest tenure. Mr. Vickers' retirement follows following 40 years service on the Decatur campus. Ms. Wood continues her work at East Central in

following:

LEAKE COUNTY: Eric Lee Adcock, Christie Dawn Allen, Shannon Nicole Brown, Rhonda Chipley Burns, Jacqueline K. Cain, Travis Cain, Eric Lamont Caples, Anthony Jason Green, Phillip D. Greer, Tiffany Cumberland Gunn, Derrick Kendale Henson, Lorrie Ann Howell, Melissa Diane Jones, Dianna A. Lane, Yancy E. Martin, Sharon F. Mathis, Sandra Moore, Joshua Cannon Ray, Nikki C. Ross, Jana E. Wilkerson and Daniel Ray Young, all of Carthage; Pamela Renee Ferguson, Dorothy Ann Graffree, Harry Hartman Holliman, Kitty Marie Thrash, Laura Shay Thornton and Brad Underwood; all of Walnut Grove; Beverly Jean Chambers, Lori W. Gunn, Cindy Presley, Jennifer Michelle Shows, Timothy Wayne Thompson, Christopher John Watkins and Emily Dawn Weaver all of Lena; and Heather Nicole Wilson, Madden.

NESHOBA COUNTY: Laura Anthony, Mandi Bates, Kevin Wayne Baysinger, Heather Marie Beckham, Jeffrey Boswell, William Lundy Brantley, Michael Brooks Bryan, Maggie Bell Chitto, Debbie Lynn Clark, Leigh Ann Coats, Stephen Roy Curtis, Richard Guy Cutrer, Janet Willis Farve, Ryan Douglas Fulton, Jimmy Paul Gray, R. Kevin Hearn, Velma L. Henry, Sara T. Hollingsworth, Shannon Dawn Jenkins, Ricky John, Lisa Johnson, Bridgett Jones, Christi T. Lee, Ralph A. Lewis, Jr., Jason Carr Long, Max Ryan Maxey, Harold Dewitt McAdory, Nolan Mitch, Kimberley D. Moore, Kandi Carol Poe, Philip Derrick Prince, Jennifer Kathleen King Rawls, Dana N. Reid, Laura Lea Robinson, Ronald Ryan

Sam, Rhonda D. Sanderford, Amanda Nichole Seward, Jinnifer Dawn Sharp, Melinda A. Smith, Tammy R. Spencer, Vincent Lamont Spencer, Teresa Nahwee Stroud, Henrietta Kaye Thomas, Jacqueline Dane Vance, Mary Ann Ross Williamson, Barbara Ann Willis, Toronda Wilson, Amanda York, Janice Kay York and Michelle Lynn Zeman, all of Philadelphia.

NEWTON COUNTY: Sherry Caroline Buckley, Chunky; Rachael Chesney, Tracey Leann Graham, Jeannie Marie Haralson, Michael Shannon Jimmie, Leslie Anne Lang, Kimberlea K. Peckham, Quendal Hayes Shoemake and Robert C. Wall, all of Conehatta; Kristen Leigh Barnett, Amanda Gibbs Blount, Mario M. Brown, Wanda Gwen Burton, Leslie Miles Cleveland, Rebecca D. Ezell, Carla Renee Glenn, Eric Demond Goodman, Sue Harrison, Terry L. Jones, Eric Todd Jordan, Melissa Paige Loper, Rebecca Kristan Luke, Sonja Renee Majure, Anthony Todd Reeves, Kristopher David Rigdon, Misty Dawn Savell and Kimberly Spillman, all of Decatur; Robin Patch Acord, Stacy Lynn Acord, John Lee Ferguson, Millard Levery Henley, David Michael Hurst Jr. and Virginia Joann Williams, all of Hickory; William Ryan Buteux, Jodi Renee Craven, Teresa A. Burnett Ehring, Lamonica Latrice Harris, Lisa Stephens Holmes, Jimothy Lamon Lewis, Lorie A. May, Jason Wayne Posey, Randall Kyle Reeves, Tish Rena Smiley and Leslie Carol Walton, all of Lawrence; David Alexander, Chrissie Lynn Chaney, Jeanna Rexanne Chaney, Stacey

Please see **COMMENCEMENT**, page 3

students who have completed the graduation process and are candidates for graduation include the